



# The Clearing House

*A journal for modern junior and senior high schools*

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# The Clearing House

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We welcome contributions from our readers. In every issue we publish teachers' and administrators' articles reporting improvements, experiments, and successes as achieved in their schools. Many of our readers have accomplished things in classrooms and in school systems that should be known in thousands of other high schools.

Our preferred length for articles is 1,500 to

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*T. C. Howe High School's plan*

# BUDDING SCIENTISTS:

## *Identifying and nurturing them*

By PAUL KLINGE

WHAT IS YOUR school doing about the severe shortage of scientifically trained personnel which is plaguing industry and causing concern in the armed forces today?

There is the prospect of two years of service in the armed forces for every able-bodied male graduated from high school. Whether this service is postponed or not, the long, involved training necessary for scientific work becomes that much longer, and for many, that much farther from reality. We cannot afford to permit able students to flounder around in high school, delaying a brilliant scientific career or scuttling the hope of such a career by lack of sufficient background in their secondary school experience.

Some of our ablest scientists did their best work in their twenties. Your high school dare not permit potential "greats" to become "mediocrities" or delayed scientists because of the lack of suitable stimulation while you have them. University education for some comes too late too often. For time is vital in science.

### *The Program*

In the fall of 1947 a program for the recognition of scientific aptitude, stimulation of interest, and the especial training of the talented in science was made more

specific and definite in Thomas Carr Howe High School in Indianapolis, Ind.

Howe is only fourteen years old, and has a steady enrolment of about 1,300, which is capacity for the existing facilities. The science curriculum is limited to a general biology course for the sophomore year, chemistry for third-year students, and physics for seniors. From time to time a semester of Chemistry III has been offered, and a semester course of physical science is entering its second year in the department. No science is offered in the freshman year. Biology, chemistry, and physics are each two-semester courses, with excellent laboratory facilities, and a double period (85 minutes) each school day.

One of the state requirements for high-school graduation is that one year of a laboratory science be taken. Biology is taken by most pupils to meet this requirement for several reasons. Chief among them is the fact that most pupils have a biology background from grade school which makes them feel more comfortable in a biology course, and the pressure to get graduation requirements out of the way early in the four-year course leads them to the first science course, which is biology. Biology, then, is in a very critical position in promoting the cause of science. For the terminal stu-

dent whose sole contact with science is biology, the teacher must be on constant guard to make the course a real science course, rather than another social-studies course about current science.<sup>1</sup>

Identification of potential scientists must, therefore, begin in the biology course. Upon reading the report of Paul Brandwein about the program of Forest Hills High School in New York, and the clearcut results obtained by the Bronx High School of Science, we decided, with the full approval of Mr. Charles M. Sharp, principal, and the active leadership of Mr. Virgil Heniser, head of the science department, to fit a program to Howe's needs and facilities.<sup>2</sup> Terminal and potential college-entrance pupils, science majors, and one-year science students, highly qualified and remarkably unqualified, are intermingled in all science classes. This creates quite a problem in curriculum planning and in the teaching methods used. Another peculiarity here is that biology is taught on a spring and fall semester basis, each interchangeable, and no effort is made to separate first- and second-semester students in any class.

The program began by having each of the three biology teachers watch in his fall semester (1947) classes for three types of pupils: first, those who had already decided to major or minor in science; second, those whose grades were clearly the highest; third, those who showed some aptitude or special interest in some phase of science. At the end of twelve weeks in the fall semester, when programs were being prepared for the spring semester, each biology teacher submitted a list of those who fell into these three categories.

From this list were chosen 40 students who were scheduled to take spring-semester

biology in 1948. Each student was then told of the purposes and plans of this "special" class, and his approval was solicited for enrolment in it. This lowered the potential enrolment to 37. Because of program conflicts, the list was finally reduced to 35 names.

There was some fear on the part of other teachers that this concentration of talent in one class might rob the other spring-semester biology classes of good students. This did not occur, as many began their biology careers in the spring and thus were not eligible for the class, while program conflicts, and the simple matter of selection of 40, from a list of over 55, permitted many with talent to be in the regular classes.

Selling the students on the idea had to be done. Not much difficulty was encountered here, however, as several appealing points were made. They were that the curriculum of the special class was to be identical in sequence and timing with the regular classes. Some paper work, which becomes monotonous busy-work with talented students, would be eliminated. Each student would be required to work by himself, or with someone else, on a semester biology project. Special speakers and field trips were scheduled. Grading was not to be on the "normal curve." An effort would be made to indicate the vocational possibilities in science, and the tie-up of biology with chemistry and physics.

### *The Techniques*

The course was launched in the spring of 1948, and has been continued each spring until the present time. The same instructor has been in charge. The purpose of such a class has been, in general, an early tentative identification of potential science students of ability. The techniques used to accomplish this differ from those used in the average biology class in several respects.

<sup>1</sup> Paul Klinge, "Is Biology a Science Course?" *School Science and Mathematics*, May 1950, pp. 379-89.

<sup>2</sup> Paul F. Brandwein, "The Selection and Training of Future Scientists," *Scientific Monthly*, March 1947, pp. 247-52.

1. Every effort was made to set the same minimum standards for a passing grade as existed in the other classes. The charge of "extra hard" could not be leveled, therefore, to kill the class, as occurred in a similar attempt in another department, because there must be student approval for enrolment. The program had to sell itself.

2. Required drill work, so necessary for the average student, was cut to a minimum, although standards for grades on laboratory work and tests were not lowered.

3. Some units of work were speeded up, as the review for them required in the average class was unnecessary in this class.

4. Instruction and time and equipment were given to each student for his science project. This involved a careful explanation of the scientific method, and the techniques used in setting up an experiment to assure valid results and conclusions. Using projects requires special instruction in methodology; it is a mistake to require them without such aid. Every effort was made to avoid the "cookbook" type of exercise, and projects involving only library research were heartily discouraged. These were in addition to the leaf collection which is the requirement in all classes.

Such project activity is one of the best methods of ascertaining true scientific attitudes and interests of pupils. It truly separates the talkers from the doers.

5. Special speakers talked to the class. Every effort was made to tie the subject of the lecture to the unit of study at hand. Each member of the science department spoke on his specialty as it pertained to the work. For example, the physics instructor pointed out the physical principles involved in osmosis and the microscope. The head of the social-studies department spoke on human conservation.

Speakers from the community were easy to obtain once the organization and the purpose of the class were explained, and they were uniformly excellent. Students in the class were good sources of information

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#### EDITOR'S NOTE

*Mr. Klinge writes that the training of scientists is "a terrible urgency." Since 1947, Thomas Carr Howe High School, Indianapolis, Ind., has been doing something about it. The author explains his school's system of spotting students with scientific aptitudes, and the special science course which has been developed for them. He teaches biology, and also is instructor of the special course which he describes.*

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for names of possible speakers, but other sources are local industry, local hospitals, universities, departments of conservation and health, and local gardening experts.

In fact, we had more names than could possibly be used. Some were chosen because of their pertinence to some of the project work of the class.

6. A continual drive was made to induce, encourage, and promote enrolment in physics and chemistry by showing their very close connection to biology. This can easily be done in the regular instruction, as well as by the special speakers.

7. The further training to be expected in science in the university or technical schools was explained as thoroughly as time and speakers could do it. Students show particular interest in this phase, since most of them have already decided to go to college. The remaining have the aptitude, but need the encouragement and an explanation of the possibilities and requirements.

8. The scholarship aid that can be expected for science majors who show high scholastic achievement, as well as some accomplishment in science, was stated often. We cannot afford to let these people await their senior year to discover these opportunities and the specific criteria by which awards are made.

9. The vocational possibilities, on a part-time basis while in school and as a lifetime career, were taken care of in detailed fash-

ion. Howe has an extensive program to acquaint students with careers, but it is in such a special class that specific questions can be leveled at the man in the field, and more detailed study can be made.

10. Field trips to local parks and industry were at a minimum, but this is a real possibility for improvement in the course. Field trips on the school campus and a nearby park are part of the regular curriculum.

11. Standardized tests were used on a rather irregular basis each year, insofar as personality traits, aptitude, and achievement were concerned. Some pupils made such testing as part of a semester project. Every student, however, was given the Co-operative Biology Test at the end of the semester.

12. Some effort was made to make the student's interest more specific and to make him aware of his strong and weak points in the field of science. This is at best only an effort, but the recognition of the problem on the part of the students is most important. A student who shows a clear aptitude in some field of science, yet shows an inability to comprehend mathematics, or a weakness in memorization, should not be steered into research work, but indications are that he could enter some type of technical occupation.

#### *Evaluation*

An evaluation of the special biology class is still premature. It will require some follow-up work with Howe graduates. It is hard to discover whether any minds were changed into majoring in science by this class, as it is in the sophomore year that a decision is finally made on this point. But some positive results have been noted. Whether these significant changes which have occurred can be credited to or blamed on the special classes of 1948 to 1951 is problematical.

The total enrolment in the science department in ratio to the total enrolment in

the school has increased slowly. The enrolment in physics and chemistry has fluctuated mildly since the peak enrolment of the war years, when physics was required, but the enrolment in biology has increased tremendously, necessitating the employment of another instructor. The total enrolment in the school has remained about the same. This would indicate a significant increase in the majors and minors in the department. No reliable figures exist for this, however.

There is an increasingly efficient pattern of techniques being formed, and a cooperative attitude manifested on the part of the science teachers in encouraging and isolating potential science students. The teachers are quite anxious to assist in some type of project for these people, and to accompany them to science meetings and field trips.

Students are encouraged to find a sponsor for their science careers in Howe. Such sponsors cannot be appointed. Sponsorship must represent a close rapport of teacher and pupil. Pupil initiation of this rapport is the best method of obtaining it.

Students who have been in the special class, as well as those who were not, are now aware of the possibilities and the requirements for science careers, and more students are now asking to be included in the class than can be accommodated. The class has an excellent reputation in the school. The science club membership has grown greatly. The science department facilities, instructional staff, and their attitude of personal help for qualified students seem to rate quite high in student eyes. Other departments have noticed the beneficial results of selectivity, and the mathematics department has begun a similar class.

Since 1948, Howe High School has had qualified entrants in the Westinghouse Science Talent Search Contest. The Indiana Science Talent Search, initiated by the Indiana Academy of Science and assisted by Purdue University, has awarded prizes to Howe students each year, beginning in

1948. There were two such winners from Howe in that year, one of whom won a national Bausch and Lomb scholarship offered each year to the University of Rochester. In 1951, another winner in the Indiana Science Talent Search also won the award of the "Outstanding Junior Scientist of Indiana."

Each year many others have graduated to enter scientific fields, and have done well, although it is too early to determine final results. The increasing number of scholarships available to such science students should be incentive enough for extra effort and achievement. And Howe students seem to realize it. The question is, whether this realization comes early enough in the high-school course to do something about it, or late enough to idly observe what might have been done if the school had recognized the student's special abilities.

This program to stimulate interest in sci-

ence, identify potential scientists, and to give special training to the talented in science has won the approval of the community, local universities, the teachers, and the students. Whether the honors and awards which Howe students have won can be credited to the help of this program or not still remains for more data to indicate. Only time can do this.

But of this there is no doubt. The attitude of the science students has increased in ambitious enthusiasm, and the instructors have a new recognition of their responsibilities along with a secure feeling that something positive is being done.

The question still remains, however—just *what* is your high school doing about laying the foundations for scientific careers in the talented? The "same old way" seems too wasteful of precious time for the talented. There is, indeed, a terrible urgency about the matter.



## Check List of the Experience Core Approach

Longer time blocks, with one or more teachers, working with a class or a group for a longer time (two or more periods), so as to know the pupil better, and guide and direct his study, work, and learning with fewer interruptions.

The methodology of the workshop, with pupil-teacher planning, laboratory techniques, pupil research, unit approach, field projects, first-hand experiences, community activities, interviews, discussion and socio-drama, more generally used.

Attention to pupil problems and concerns, pupil interest, and pupil needs as a factor in motivating learning and in relating the curriculum to life's tasks. Guidance techniques utilized in the classroom, with a unification of class and guidance functions.

Content selected and organized around larger problems or projects with function in the growth of the individual toward personal-social goals, recognizing that "experience" is also "content" and as such plays an important part in each person's education.

Staff planning of the core with attention to the contribution of all groups and with opportunities for teachers and supervisors to share experiences

and evaluate progress.

Consulting service furnished by central office or by curriculum specialists with assistance to the class teacher in planning, locating materials and resources, organizing trips, carrying out projects, and evaluating results.

Various media for instruction utilized—field trips, the library, motion pictures, auditory aids, with appropriate source materials for both pupils and staff.

Behavior, attitudes, ways of thinking and acting receive greater emphasis of education (in contrast to mere facts to be learned) with opportunity to apply, to evaluate, to discuss, to act.

Evaluation which goes beyond usual factual tests, and makes use of systematic informal and formal techniques, carried on with the same attention to detail and technique as is used in a formal test program.

Parent cooperation in interpreting this approach to the curriculum and in enlisting the participation of parents in support of the school program.—*Curriculum and Materials* (New York City Board of Education).

*The Oak Ridge plan:*

# Instructional Materials: Identify—Don't Censor

By R. H. OSTRANDER

RECENTLY INDIVIDUALS and groups of citizens have increasingly been expressing concern over the kind of instructional materials used in the public schools of their communities. Should such materials be censored? If so, by whom?

These questions plagued the members of the administrative staff of the Oak Ridge schools. This group, composed of the principals of the eight elementary schools, one twelve-grade school, a junior high school, and a senior high school, and the other administrative and supervisory officers of the school system, considered the question as a part of the agenda of a workshop held in June 1949. After careful study, it was decided to establish a committee for the "screening of instructional materials." This committee was composed of an elementary principal, a secondary principal, two teachers, and three librarians. The superintendent and assistant superintendent in charge of instruction were included as *ex-officio* members.

Perhaps the establishing of the committee tended to cause the professional staff to consider the problem solved. Possibly the complexity and controversial nature of the issue overwhelmed the committee. At any rate, very little action took place during the school year 1949-50.

In October 1950 the administrative staff again attacked the problem of the selection of instructional materials. The "Report of the Committee of the American Legion, Department of Michigan, on the Evaluation of Instructional Materials" was used as a basis for the discussion. The decision

was finally made "that an Instructional Materials Evaluation Committee be created to establish criteria and a plan for evaluation of instructional materials." The personnel of the screening committee as previously established was to be used, plus approved lay representation. It was the Parents' Advisory Council that selected the three lay members of the committee. This council, composed of laymen chosen by the parent-teacher organizations of each of the schools, meets monthly as a liaison group between the school administration and the community. Two representatives of the Atomic Energy Commission's Security Division accepted an invitation to serve as consultants.

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

*The questions of whether to censor instructional materials and how to maintain standards of academic freedom currently plague many a school system. So perhaps you'd like to know about the Instructional Materials Evaluation Committee of the Oak Ridge, Tenn., Public Schools. This committee censors nothing, but works to detect propaganda, and identify it for what it is, so that it may be "used wisely" in the schools. Such a plan might seem to calm the fevered bosoms of those who demand censorship, by showing them that something is being done; and to reassure those who stand up for academic freedom, so they can sit down and rest awhile. Dr. Ostrander, until recently superintendent of schools in Oak Ridge, is now superintendent of schools in Mineola, N. Y.*

---

At its first meeting the committee decided to invite three high-school students to serve as committee members. The president of the student council, another senior, and a junior accepted the invitation.

Tentative purposes established by the committee itself are:

1. Instructional materials should be evaluated by the committee only in terms of loyalty to the American system and to the United States government.

2. Freedom of thought must be preserved. No action or suggestions of the committee should hamper the freedom of thought of a student or teacher, or in any way impair the freedom of discussion in the classroom.

3. The word "screening" should not be used in connection with purposes or functions of this committee. Its purpose is not to delete materials but to help to detect propaganda in order that the materials may be used wisely. Materials are not to be banned, but to be identified.

4. The purpose is not to condemn anything now in effect, but to develop standards and safeguards for the future. The purpose is prevention rather than cure.

5. The committee unanimously agreed that the first purpose of the committee should be the education of the committee itself.

The committee favored the formation

of a similar group for each school, including citizen members, "to operate in conjunction with the central committee on the evaluation of instructional materials." (Some of the schools had already established such local committees.)

No claim is made that the Oak Ridge schools have found *the* solution to the problem of the selection of instructional materials. First steps have, however, been co-operatively undertaken by the professional staff, representative laymen, and representative students. The committee has expressed itself as favoring the use of materials about Communism, for example, provided the maturity of the students and the instructional methods encourage critical evaluation of such materials in a perspective conducive to the preservation of the American way of life. Books and other instructional materials may be referred to the committee whenever there is doubt as to the suitability of their use at a particular grade level. A number of books are now being examined, films previewed, and recordings checked.

It is hoped that this positive approach to the problem of possible subversive influences in the classrooms will result in maintaining academic freedom for teachers and at the same time advance critical appraisal of subversive propaganda by students in the Atomic City.

## For Administrators and Theorists: A Semester in the Ranks

Every supervisor, administrator, and theorist in a given system should be forced, every fourth year, to go back for six months to the classroom (without loss of salary, of course, although a lower economic level might help) and teach.

He should be obliged to make a roster, administer homerooms, direct extracurricular activities, fill out countless blanks countless times, worry about books, float from room to room through crowded corridors, teach lyric poetry in a wood-shop, and music appreciation near a crowded lunchroom, seat forty-five students in a room containing thirty-nine desks, answer innumerable calls by clerks, nurses, and

guidance experts, direct fire drills, and at the same time maintain the poise, the dignity and the mingled geniality and aloofness that generally are supposed to be characteristic qualities of the good teacher.

For good measure, he should have his fair share of the mentally deficient, and the morally obtuse, the physically unclean, the chattering, the giggling, the belligerent, the impudent, the gum-chewing and habitually tardy. Then he would return to his college classroom or to his administrative desk a sadder and a wiser man.—*Portland School Bulletin*, quoted in *North Dakota Teacher*.

Answering 15 charges against administrators:

# GRIPING DOES SOMETHING to YOU

By REED FULTON

**G**RIPING DOES something to you. It curdles the disposition, reduces satisfaction, fertilizes animosity. The only antidote is to say something good as often as you uncork your gripes.

When teachers gripe about the principal and other administrators—as they do—what is the burden of their antagonisms? Do such gripes spring from unselfish desire to serve their pupils and their profession the better or from personal irritation and aversions? Do teachers indicate normal ability to see the other person's viewpoint?

Some two hundred high-school principals were asked the question: "During the years when you were teaching you made and heard many gripes about principals and administrators. What were those gripes?"

Analysis and elimination of repeats give us some forty typical complaints which can be classified under these headings: Personal, administrative, and pupil concern. Since one of the major causes of gripes lies in poor communication—neither understands the other's viewpoint—perhaps we can make comment which will increase understanding and consequently reduce the gripes.

Let's spread out some of the personal gripes first and make some observations. By "personal" we mean those which deal definitely with the administrator as a person.

"He's too young." "He's too old." To be sure, such condemnation may come from a careful evaluation of the administrator's results, but it sounds more like an emotional outburst on the part of the griper. The

complaint could come from jealousy; it could come from distrust based upon sad experience. The young administrator may make too many mistakes in judgment; he may have an uncomfortable number of new ideas. The old administrator may have grown too set in his ways; he may have slacked off in leadership. Age, per se, is a treacherous reason for criticism.

"He gets the best pay along with a shine on the seat of his pants." It is not always easy to distinguish those qualities or those duties which go with the work of the administrator. It is still more difficult to put a price on such things. The daily administrative routine is a bit of a mystery to the average teacher. Yet a typical day may bring such a list as: Met with school activities finance committee. Consulted father of girl who had disappeared. Settled details of next assembly. Conducted a pupil case conference. Soothed an irritated cafeteria cook. Guided a boy whose mother has just divorced his stepfather. Interpreted an emotional teacher to an emotional parent. Recommended repair expenditure of \$30,000. Interviewed police and reporters in car theft case. Made notes for talk to P.T.A. Stemmed a young riot in study hall. *Et cetera.*

Yes, the shine on the administrator's blue serge can come from encountering friction in more ways than one.

"As long as he can blow his own horn he's happy." This characterization is not typical of administrators. However, as the head of the school, there are times when the administrator must speak for the school.

When he does he may unwisely use the pronoun "I" instead of "we." Remember that there will also be times when he will have to carry the weight of criticism for the school.

*"I know very well he favors certain departments and certain activities."* No matter how adept the administrator is in his balancing act, he will be guilty of favoritism in the eyes of those teachers who do not have an overall view of educational needs. Too many subject teachers fail to see the way in which the curriculum needs to be changed. It is likewise to be expected that if the school board has selected the administrator only because he has been a good coach, or because he has made a good fellow of himself with the business men, he is less apt to have an unprejudiced viewpoint.

*"Athletics always get the breaks around here."* If the comparable amount of space in the newspapers reveals public interest, then there is some justification for stressing athletics in a school. Unhappily schools—and administrators—are often evaluated on the basis of the standing of athletic teams. The public needs to be educated in this matter.

*"He promises and then forgets."* This could be an accurate statement. An administrator may have so many problems, he forgets his promises. Or he may have no better method of dealing with unwise suggestions than by giving promises he has no intention of remembering. A percentage of the requests or suggestions made by teachers are impractical from the administrator's angle. The administrator should, however, be forthright enough to meet such situations directly.

*"He is always spying or eavesdropping."* Too bad if he gives such an impression; too bad if teachers are small-minded enough to misinterpret. It is unlikely that a really mature person will ever voice such a comment even if it be true. It must be recognized that the administrator needs a clear picture of the school. The faculty should

admit this and should cooperate in achieving that need. Some teachers, suffering from hardening of the techniques and/or emotional instability, are against all evaluation or stimulation.

We now turn to a sampling of gripes against the administrative procedure.

*"We come in the fall and find all assignments already made, just like that."* Teachers should have the opportunity to express preferences in advance of assignments, but should expect that for various reasons some preferences must be ignored. A well-constructed program passes through one master-mind. Conflicts have to be ironed out.

For the sake of the pupil each teacher should have considerable range both in ability and in choice. Teacher-growth is stimulated by new levels of pupils and new subject extensions. A school system has a right to expect a considerable degree of versatility. Every school has examples of teachers who have used the same outline in the same room to the same level of pupils for an ossifying number of years.

*"Why do I get all the problem kids?"* Of the nature of things this is more apt to be true if you teach a required subject to

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#### EDITOR'S NOTE

*Probably there isn't a reader of THE CLEARING HOUSE who hasn't uttered one, or several, or even all of the gripes against administrators which Mr. Fulton is considering. You might even call these the Basic Fifteen Gripes in their area, because the fifteen are a refinement and organization of some forty complaints reported by about two hundred high-school principals who participated in a study. Mr. Fulton undertakes to answer, or to temporize upon, each of the gripes. All he asks is that the total output of gripes be curtailed. All we ask is that he be given a fair hearing. He is principal of Roosevelt High School, Seattle, Wash.*

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sophomores or if you are a shop teacher. It may also be because the administrator believes that you can better serve the child who needs special understanding. Or it may be that you have special talent in producing problem children out of the normal group sent through your doorway. In general you can safely bet that the administrator has not set out to bedevil you with malice intended.

*"There is no discipline. I never worked in such a noisy building."* School standards of all kinds grow from cooperative thinking and united effort. True, the administrator should provide adequate leadership, but the standards of the classroom usually set the standards of the school.

The attitudes of administrators toward "discipline" are widely different. At the moment there is a strong trend toward the "devaluation of discipline" as usually defined. Administrators are thinking of classroom guidance, discussion of pupil-school problems under fine teachership, development of self-control rather than authoritarian control, providing guided experience in realistic democracy as being an atmosphere out of which intelligent "discipline" emerges.

When you have a school in which teachers refuse to carry their share of the load in corridors and activities, you will find a misuse of freedom on the part of adolescents.

*"He never takes a stand on anything."* The administrator must also be a diplomat—if he's going to keep down moving bills. It's understandable that a good many administrators feel safer in slow motion when it comes to definite decision. Have you ever tried expressing approval of decisions he has made? You might build some sense of security for the administrator.

*"My classes are always being interrupted."* Surveys reveal that a reasonable campaign to reduce unnecessary interruptions is helpful; that the over-all purposes of education include numerous activities

which subject-minded teachers call "interruptions"; that much more time is actually lost through tardy beginning of class work and early slack-off, than from administrative interruptions.

*"How can he expect me to teach, with all the clerical duties he pours on me?"* "He asks for our ideas and then ignores them!" "He lets the kids run the school." "Why not a bulletin instead of another meeting?" "I never get any materials or equipment to work with, then he expects miracles." "If there's a policy here, I don't know what it is!" "He's always buttering-up some young woman teacher." "Our classes are too large." "Why can't we leave when the kids do?" "He never tries to get more pay for the teachers." "The janitor gets away with murder around here." "The principal hasn't visited my class in six years."

There you have the general run of the gripes against the way the administrator operates. There are a few other complaints which seem to spring from some special concern about the pupils.

*"We send our problem pupils to the office but they come right back. Nothing done!"* You see? Teachers want ACTION. Some want to be rid of the pupil; some want him punished; some want him changed. How many realize that even with the most skillful efforts to adjust the pupil's thinking, the success of the journey to the office rests to a large degree on the manner in which the teacher takes the pupil back?

*"We are excluded from the conferences the principal holds with the parents in connection with problem cases."* Under some circumstances a three-way conference is best. However, often that means leaving a class unsupervised and it might mean that the principal would have less opportunity to act as a lightning rod.

Before we leave our topic, let's think for a moment about some of the things which do not appear in this particular list of gripes.

No one said: *"Why don't administrators*

*put in an up-to-date curriculum?"* Does this omission indicate contentment? Do our teachers believe that the needs of youth are being met? Are teachers fearful of curriculum changes which lessen security in their subject field? Or do they believe that they are making sufficient changes within the boundary of their subjects?

No one said: "*Why hasn't the adminis-*

*trator tried to stimulate me to become a better teacher?"* Surely the basis for such a complaint is just as prevalent as any other cause. And there is logic in looking at the administrator at this moment. On top of the wide variety of chores demanding time from the administrator, there is this obligation to be a wise utilizer and expander of the talents of the faculty.



## \* \* Tricks of the Trade \* \*

By TED GORDON

**SELF-STARTERS**—I have found a very practicable device to aid those students in my English classes who are apprehensive about the three-minute talks which are part of the course. Formerly, many of them floundered about, not knowing how much time they had consumed, and sat down before they had performed adequately for credit. Now I place at a spot where all may see, the common egg timer which may be purchased in the 5-and-10-cent store. The student operates the timer himself and knows exactly when he has satisfactorily concluded his assignment.—*Frank E. Ramsey, Cranford High School, Cranford, N. J.*

**POST-CANASTA IDEA**—For work that needs to be done just off the floor, try using old card tables with the legs cut down to appropriate height.



**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Readers are invited to submit aids and devices which may be of help to others. Please try to limit contributions to 50 words or fewer—the briefer the better. Original ideas are preferred; if an item is not original, be sure to give your source. This publication reserves all rights to material submitted, and no items will be returned. Address contributions to THE CLEARING HOUSE, Dr. Gordon teaches in East Los Angeles Junior College, Los Angeles, Cal.

**FAITH SHALL MOVE MOUNTAINS**—The social psychologist speaks of "faith in unrealized potentialities" as a dynamic social force. People will do almost anything to live up to the good reputations they—rightly or extravagantly—enjoy. The rumor reached my boy that his geography classmates said, "He knows all the answers." He didn't, of course. But he immediately shifted into high gear. Give him time and he will. The faith of a couple of kids is moving my mountain.—*William Lamers, Assistant Supt. of Schools, Milwaukee, Wis.*

**PUZZLE AND U.S.**—To help pupils learn the location of the 48 states, I have them paste outline maps onto cardboard. They then cut out each state, and the subsequent jig-saw-assembling contests also add variety to our classroom procedures.—*Carlos de Zafra, Jr., John Marshall High School, Rochester, N.Y.*

**PAPER ROUTINE**—To make paper routine easier give each student a number which he puts on his assignments. Pass in papers from the back, each student putting his on top. Collect across the front in numerical order. Then the papers are all set to go back after being checked.—*L. Margaret Montgomery, Compton College, Compton, Calif.*

# Teaching Good Job Attitudes in ENGLISH CLASS

By  
EDITH LACKEY BAUMANN

**A**N ENGLISH TEACHER for twenty-five years, I have also worked for the past eight years—almost simultaneously with teaching. Having examined my own job attitudes critically after all those years in the classroom, I became interested in the job attitudes of others who came under my observation and supervision.

Two years ago I wrote a training program for my firm. To my surprise I found that it was almost entirely a matter of trying to establish good job attitudes; even more to my surprise I found that I was saying those things which would not have needed saying at all had I and others like me insisted on good job attitudes in the classroom. In not teaching good job attitudes we are by default permitting children to establish poor job attitudes. These result in school work considerably below their maximum ability and later express themselves in the playground attitude of which employers and personnel managers complain these days, in careless, sloppy, and inaccurate work, in demands for high pay for the least possible effort. And what of our public-relations policy when business says quite bluntly that it doesn't like our product!

Read without preface or comment, reasons for failure on a job sound to my sophomores and juniors like reasons for failure in school. I think they are right. Children see much more readily than do many of their teachers the parallel between school for a teen-ager and a job for an adult. They can, I believe, be taught good job attitudes which will improve their efficiency in every high-school subject, enable them to derive more from college or any

advanced learning situation, make them more capable on the part-time job now or on the full-time job to which they go after high school or college, and help them to achieve job satisfaction and happiness in adult life.

I'll still encourage originality and creative effort. I'll stimulate and reward initiative. I'll provide opportunity for independent thinking and self-expression and the development of desirable social goals. Sometimes I'll even be "cooperative" and "democratic" and let the pupils plan and decide and lead, but about that which is definite I'm going to be definite. Teaching combines many roles, and there are times when I'm going to be a drill master. I may even be tyrannical in my insistence on mastery up to the pupil's capacity to learn, because I believe that these are ideas which have consequences—constructive ones for a happy and useful adult life.

In developing job attitudes to be acquired in the English class I have incorporated practically everything I know about teaching. I do not advise hurling the list at the pupil all at once. Introduce it as the subject matter suggests; illustrate these attitudes in slogans which the pupil comes to understand so well that he sees them as applicable not only in your class but in other classes. Help him to see the carry-over to any job he tries to do anywhere. Help him to see that learning can be purposeful and practical, that the job doesn't have to be easy to be enjoyable if he is willing to make the necessary effort to get satisfaction from his results.

I believe you will find good job attitudes a means of accomplishing those two func-

tions of the teacher which Gilbert Highet states in *The Art of Teaching*: To make a bridge between school or college and the world. To make a bridge between youth and maturity."

Here is my list of job attitudes:

You and Your English Class:

Let Good Job Attitudes Help You!

1. Come on time; better still, come a little ahead of time. Bring all necessary equipment. Be ready to start work *when the bell rings*.

2. There are some things you need to *know*. You'll never know them until you *learn* them. Since no one can learn anything for you, the job is up to you.

3. Be sure you know what you are supposed to do *before* you start to do it. Learn to follow directions exactly.

4. You are responsible for hearing what is said in class. You are unlikely to *hear* unless you *listen*!

5. Listening involves a conscious effort *to hear* and *to understand*.

6. A few simple principles, *if understood and applied*, will prevent most of the common errors in *grammar*, in *punctuation*, in *spelling*, and in *sentence structure*.

7. Originality is a splendid quality but there is no point in being original about principles of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and sentence structure. *Learn them as stated; say them always the same way*.

8. Some material needs to be *memorized*. You have not memorized it until you can say it *exactly as stated*.

9. Be *definite* about that which is *definite*. Information which is only partially learned and understood merely adds to your confusion.

10. Check your understanding of principles by making sure you know *why* you *choose* what you *choose*, whether in exercises or tests or in your own compositions. You will find this more satisfactory than doing grammar by ear.

11. You do not really *understand* a prin-

ciple unless you can *illustrate* it. Once you can illustrate it, you will recognize those situations in which it should be applied.

12. Don't expect to be given credit for *knowing* unless you can give evidence *that you do know*.

13. Make a consistent effort to be at your best. *Your best is none too good* to win the kind of recognition you want.

14. Don't make excuses. Any assignment involves having the work completed *when it is due*.

15. Take pride in *knowing* that which you have had an opportunity to learn.

16. Learn to know when you *know*; then you can use your information confidently. Learn to know when you *don't know*; then you can find out.

17. Write *legibly*; speak *audibly*! Otherwise, why speak or write at all?

18. Know what you are trying to say before you try to say it!

19. The more you know about any subject the more interesting you will find it.

20. You limit yourself when you do well only that in which you are already interested.

21. Make your greatest effort with those parts of the course which are difficult for you.

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#### EDITOR'S NOTE

Mrs. Baumann teaches English in Evanston Township High School, Evanston, Ill. For the past eight years she also has worked for a restaurant firm in that city—full time in summer, part-time during the school year. Part of her work was writing the personnel-training program for the firm. She realized that the employees wouldn't have needed so much job training if their high-school teachers had insisted on good job attitudes in the classroom. So she wrote a "job-attitude manual" which she uses with her English classes. The "manual" is reproduced in this article. Many of her items could be used by teachers in other subject fields.

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22. Mere literacy is not enough, *but* there is no reason why the high-school pupil should not be literate!

23. Learn to be objectively critical of your own work. Be sure you are applying *all* you know. Learn to find your mistakes *before someone else finds them!*

24. Be neat; be accurate! Be sure that the content and appearance of your papers make you proud to have your name on them.

25. Take pride in any piece of work of which you can honestly say: "This represents the very best of which I am capable *now.*"

26. Don't let the best you have done be your standard of the best you can do.

27. Don't shrug off your mistakes with "So what!" Learn from them and try not to make the same mistake twice!

28. What kind of errors are you most likely to make in grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure? Concentrate on the principles involved. Stay with them *until you master them.*

29. Learn to know when a word doesn't look right. *Don't guess;* look it up in the dictionary.

30. Analyze your spelling errors. Which ones could you have avoided had you applied spelling rules; been conscious of prefix, root, or suffix; related letters to sound or spelling to pronunciation; been careful to avoid confusion of homonyms?

31. Even the most difficult word can be mastered *if* you (1) look at the word and say the word; (2) look at the word and say the letters in the word; (3) cover the word and say the letters; (4) look at the word and write the word; (5) cover the word and write the word—as many times as necessary.

32. Your ideas and opinions mean little unless you can support them. Learn to know *why* you think what you think.

33. The better your ideas the greater your responsibility for learning to express yourself accurately and convincingly.

34. You cannot be said to have read until you *know what you have read.* Re-read until you do know!

35. Don't read gymnastically—that is, don't just jump over the unfamiliar word. Know when there is not enough evidence for you to get meaning from context. That word you need to look up!

36. You do not really know what you have read until you can express the idea in your own words.

37. Learn to see *what* an author is trying to do and to see *how* he does it.

38. Learn to see parallels between what you read and what you know.

39. An author's ideas will mean little to you unless you can relate them to your own experience and observation.

40. An author will always tell you enough about a character for you to understand *why* that character does as he does. On a similar basis try to understand why people in real life do as they do. Learn to be objective about *why you do as you do!*

41. Poetry? Does the meaning elude you? Read it aloud! Unless you *hear* poetry, you are likely to miss much of the meaning and nearly all of the rhythm.

42. The very things which are designed to *help* you (the card catalogue, the *Reader's Guide*, reference books of all kinds) will merely baffle you *unless you learn to use them efficiently.*

43. Don't let what you *think* get in the way of your understanding what an author is trying to *say.* Hear him out; then try to be as articulate in expressing your ideas.

44. Enthusiasm is a rare quality in a pupil. One of the finest compliments you can ever receive—in school or out—is this: "You do your job as if you really like it!"

45. Don't flaunt your lack of interest. You merely make the situation more difficult for yourself and for others in your group.

46. On a dull day try *acting* interested

and attentive. Before you know it, you'll probably surprise yourself by really *feeling* that way.

47. How well can you evaluate your own work? Do you know why your mark is as it is? If not, talk with your teacher. This is the basis of any constructive effort to improve. Don't block yourself by resentment and failure to understand.

48. You do not sacrifice your integrity, your personality, or your initiative by taking directions from a person in a position to give directions.

49. Learn to enjoy your school work—and that does not mean playing on the job but doing the job so well that you get satis-

faction from your efforts and from your results.

Good job attitudes will increase your efficiency in every high-school subject.

Good job attitudes will help you to make the most of opportunities in college or in any advanced learning situation.

Good job attitudes will help you to be a capable and dependable employee on the part-time job *now* and on the full-time job to which you go *after high school or college*.

Good job attitudes will do much to insure your success and happiness in adult life.



## The English Department Wants a Little Cooperation

Both teachers and students alike are inclined to notice the special department of English and conclude, very naturally, that English is of no great concern to other departments. After all, is the history department concerned about a student's knowledge of chemistry or economics? Of course not. Each department has its own responsibilities. That leaves the English department and *only* the English department responsible for a student's English. And that means actually an almost complete disregard of the quality of a student's English in all courses except those in composition.

Yet in any and all special fields is there not need of adequate communication of ideas? Of what value is an inarticulate Einstein? Should not a student's expression ability be equal to the task of expressing *without loss* his complete grasp of any subject matter?

Most students naturally consider it a waste of time and effort to develop their expression ability merely to please an English teacher. If they can get away with murdering the King's English in all classes except English, why not? And most teachers naturally expect the English department to resolve the difficulty singlehanded.

That brings us to the important realization that if teachers who are not primarily English teachers do not insist on good English, there is little point in attempting to teach it in the English department. That department is hardly in a position to tell the students what is demanded of them in other departments where they will do most of their

writing. Furthermore, there is no such thing as neutrality. The teacher who is not *for* good English is *against* it. In other words, the best teachers of English may not be in the English department at all!

A cooperative attitude which cuts across departmental barriers strikes at the root of the difficulty—specialization. That attitude is embodied in such actions as those taken at Harvard and Columbia. In the later half of the Harvard Freshman English course there are no scheduled class meetings. Students bring written assignments due in other classes to their English instructor and work out their individual problems in conference. At Columbia instructors of Contemporary Civilization and Humanities were persuaded by the English department to make the quality of a student's written performance a recognized part of the standards of those two courses, this being considered the first step toward getting similar cooperation eventually from all faculty members.

If only all teachers were teachers of English! Not in the same sense as those in the English department, but indirectly—not necessarily by "comma chasing" or direct checking of mechanics, but by letting the student know that both content *and* form are important! It means letting the student know that you are concerned when his clumsy sentences and poorly constructed paragraphs interfere with an adequate expression of an idea. The English department would like to cooperate.—JAMES I. BROWN in *Phi Delta Kappan*.

# THE STUDY OF A PROBLEM

*We adapted methods to  
purposes in a P. D. unit*

By  
EDITH F. ERICKSON

THE MAJOR purposes of Cleveland's twelfth-grade problems course are to assist pupils:

1. To develop an alert awareness, a social sensitivity, and a continuing interest in significant problems.

2. To build a background of information and understanding on which to base opinions and judgments.

3. To develop techniques appropriate for the study of problems and controversial questions.

4. To develop attitudes and behavior consistent with effective citizenship in a democracy.

At the beginning of the course pupils are taught to identify problems. We distinguish between problems and topics and develop the idea that a problem calls for a solution, or at least an attempted solution. Partly through discussion, but largely through practice, pupils should learn that the study of a problem is much more than the assembling of an array of facts, no matter how impressive or how logically arranged.

The pupils can and should develop criteria for problem selection and apply these throughout the course. Some of these criteria might well be:

Is it a significant problem?

Is it timely?

Is it of some concern to each of us as individuals and to the people of the community?

Is its solution of real importance to society?

Does it have long-range implications as well as immediate significance?

Let us now turn to actual classroom pro-

cedure in considering the adapting of methods to the purposes of the problems course. Go with me to a classroom in Collinwood High School, Cleveland, Ohio. It is a classroom equipped with a variety of books on open shelves, a wide selection of pamphlet material, sets of the *American Observer* and *Senior Scholastic*, a vertical file, adequate bulletin-board space—in fact, a classroom lending itself to the teaching and study of problems.

We began the work one fall semester by talking informally about the most significant events of the summer, and then of things the pupils had read or heard or seen that might have some relation to our study of modern problems. We were thus making a start in identifying problems and in developing and applying criteria.

In the course of our conversation we learned that a goodly number of the class had seen the film *Lost Boundaries* at a neighborhood theatre and had been much impressed. The pupils decided that this film dealt with a significant and timely problem, one with long-range implications that aroused their interest, one they wanted to study in some detail.

We decided to call the problem "Living Together as Americans." Our next step was to define the specific problem involved in living together as *Americans* on which we should focus attention. We agreed that as a nation our actual practices as shown in *Lost Boundaries* sometimes fall short of our professed ideals. No one questioned the validity of our ideals; the questioning was directed toward practices. We defined the core of our problem as one of squaring

our practices with our accepted ideals.

As a guide for directing the study of this particular problem, the teacher formulated some clear-cut objectives, and kept these in mind as well as the more general objectives for the problems course as a whole.

In working with the pupils, a breaking down of the problem—a partial analysis—was the next step. We raised the question, "How is America in a very real sense a laboratory of democratic living?" Democratic living called for some clarification, so we proceeded to locate pronouncements in the Declaration of Independence and elsewhere that are a precious part of our heritage; we proceeded to study our constitutional guarantees and to discuss our general understanding of democratic living.

We turned our attention to America as a laboratory. We studied the makeup of our population—its racial, religious, and ethnic groups, the distribution of population within our country, recent mobility, and population trends. We included a brief review of our immigration history, the pupils finding out from where, when, and why their ancestors came to America.

We dealt with the refugees of the 1930's and the displaced persons who have come to our shores since World War II. We found that some pupils knew personally, and that our own student body included, a number of these recent arrivals. We found that some of the churches to which pupils belonged and individuals they knew had given a helping hand to these new immigrants.

We noted the national scene, our city of Cleveland as a cross section of America, and our own school with its cosmopolitan population as a miniature of the larger laboratory—America. We found various examples in history and from personal experiences that showed that discrimination is sometimes directed toward groups and individuals because of recency of arrival and national origins.

As our study progressed we were careful

not to lose sight of the core of our problem—the discrepancy between practices and ideals. More pupils saw the film *Lost Boundaries*; several saw *Home of the Brave*. Others recalled having seen *Gentleman's Agreement* and *Crossfire*, and the class decided that these films all dealt with manifestations of the same problem. Pupils began to refer to newspaper items, articles in current magazines, radio programs. They began to bring in material for bulletin-board display and class use. Book selection in some of the English classes was correlated with the problem on which we were working in social studies.

We did our planning of this first problem step by step rather than attempt a complete analysis and over-all planning, which we sometimes do later in the semester, especially with problems that have fewer ramifications.

Though the pupils did not question the validity of our professed democratic ideals or the soundness of our constitutional guarantees, we decided, nevertheless, to find out whether these ideals and guarantees had a sound basis other than a moral one. We formulated the question, "What

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#### EDITOR'S NOTE

*There are four main purposes of Collinwood High School's twelfth-grade problems course—and each unit or problem studied is to contribute to those purposes in order to have a lasting effect upon the thinking and behavior of the students. In the case of each problem-unit taken up, this calls for a special selection and adaptation of classroom methods that will best serve the four purposes in dealing with the particular problem. Miss Erickson shows how she "adapted methods to purposes" for an intercultural problem, by giving a running account of the classroom progress of the unit. She teaches social studies in Collinwood High School, Cleveland, Ohio.*

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significant facts about human beings do we need to know?" We wanted reputable and readable references. We used *Races of Mankind*, a Public Affairs pamphlet by Benedict and Weltfish; we used *Sense and Nonsense About Race* by Alpenfels. We used the strip film *We Are All Brothers*.

This study caused us to ask, "What blind-spots in our thinking on human relations should we analyze?" We considered prejudices, stereotypes, scapegoating. The realization that the practice of scapegoating is as old as history, but that the victim varies, seemed to make an impact on the thinking of the pupils; so too did the differentiation between descriptive and derogatory stereotypes; so too did examples of what prejudice and discrimination can do to the victim, to the individual who is guilty of prejudice and discrimination, to society as a whole. We tried to analyze the basic reasons for prejudice and the ways in which it develops and manifests itself.

In the study of prejudice many of the examples cited dealt with Negroes. We decided in our pupil-teacher planning to raise as our next question, "What interracial problems call for understanding and constructive action in strengthening our democracy?"

We turned the spotlight of attention on the Negroes, the second largest racial group in our population. We did not ignore, however, the American Indians, our people of oriental extraction, and American citizens from south of the border.

In our study of the Negro we learned of some conditions indicating second-rate citizenship. We tried to place ourselves in other people's shoes to figure out the problems in communities where Negroes constitute a much larger percentage of the population than the ten or twelve per cent who live in our own city. We tried to put ourselves in the place of both the Negroes and the dominant racial group. We turned a strong spotlight of attention on our own community, noting positive assets as well

as shortcomings and liabilities in our record on interracial relations.

The atmosphere in the class was such that one pupil, a Negro veteran with three years of service in Europe, gave a straightforward extemporaneous talk about the discrimination he experienced overseas. The questions and answers that followed were gratifying to the teacher.

Our Negro veteran told of evidence he had seen in Germany of the anti-Semitic program of the Nazis. That was the springboard for the next part of our study.

We looked up statistics in the *World Almanac* and found the comparative numbers of Jews in the world in 1939 and 1947. When we first saw the statistics for Europe, statistics that showed a decrease of some six million Jews, several pupils gasped audibly. Those statistics gave an opportunity for critical thinking in more ways than in making and interpreting accurate graphs. Our next question, one suggested by anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany, to which our attention had been directed, was, "What cultural and religious differences within our population present a challenge in working for true democratic intergroup living?"

We noticed variations of the Golden Rule used in different religions of the world. We found some beliefs and practices common to our great religious faiths in America—belief in one God, belief in immortality, use of public worship, faith in the power of prayer. We stressed loyalty and the need for increased devotion to one's own religious faith and also respect for the rights of others to follow their own beliefs.

One of our boys gave us of his own volition some interesting and helpful information about Hebrew faith and practices. That led us directly to a consideration of anti-Semitism, its possible religious basis, its possible economic basis, the transplanting from other countries, the forms anti-Semitism takes, and finally its un-American flavor. We used the survey made by

*Fortune* some years ago, and other authoritative material.

By this time we had built a fairly substantial background of information on our problem. We had measured practices in terms of ideals and had found them wanting. We now asked ourselves, "What can we do to make our practices more nearly measure up to our ideals?"

We noticed the moral need, the need from the standpoint of national unity and stability, the need from the standpoint of world prestige and leadership, from the standpoint of strengthening and spreading democracy.

We tried to face the problem realistically. We considered the role of the government—federal, state, and local. We considered the work of various organizations, noting again the work of the Urban League, the N.A.A.C.P., and others; we learned of the work of the Southern Regional Council, the National Conference of Christians and Jews, to mention but a few. We considered the responsibility of communities, the lessons to be learned from the Detroit race riots of 1943. We discussed the purposes and work of the Cleveland Community Relations Board, which is a definite part of the city government. We studied the history of the F.E.P.C.; we talked about the unfavorable action taken by the General Assembly of Ohio on proposed fair employment legislation. We studied the voluntary cooperative fair employment practices plan sponsored by the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce and their printed report. We studied the fair employment practices ordinance passed by the Cleveland City Council and thus created an interest in following the workings of the provisions of this ordinance.

We had read and discussed the digest of the report by the President's Committee on Civil Rights, using as our reference for that purpose *These Rights Are Ours to Keep*, a Public Affairs pamphlet. We now had a talk by an able pupil who had read the en-

tire report *To Secure These Rights*, a talk summarizing the findings and stressing the recommendations made by the committee. We found out what presidential and congressional action had been taken to date in line with these recommendations. We tried to stimulate a continuing interest in the proposed civil-rights program.

We looked with a critical eye at our own city and found much to indicate real democracy in action and some things that called for improvement. We considered what we as individuals and the various groups to which we belong could do to promote better human relations. We decided that each individual has a real responsibility in the solution of this problem—the problem of reconciling practices with the ideals of democratic living, the problem at the very heart of the great experiment of living together as Americans. We made tangible suggestions for carrying out both individual and group responsibility.

Let us look more closely at the methods used in the classroom procedure just described. The selection of the problem was made from among several tentative suggestions. Both teacher guidance and active pupil participation figured in the choice. Motivation was already present in the form of the interest that many pupils felt and communicated to others as a result of seeing a particular motion picture. The teacher capitalized on this evident interest. Through discussion we identified the situation with which the picture deals as being a pertinent problem. We applied criteria to justify its selection for study. We defined the problem in specific terms and ferreted out a core that seemed to call for a solution, a core on which we could focus attention.

We made use of cooperative teacher-pupil planning throughout. In this particular case we did this step by step. We built a background of workable information from reliable sources before coming to grips with possible solutions.

We uncovered conflicting ideas and di-

vergent points of view. We ran into sharp disagreement on such questions as segregation, restrictive covenants, fair-employment practices legislation. We tried to look at matters objectively. We made a real effort to discuss rather than to argue, remembering that "it takes more ignorance and less manners to argue than to discuss." We avoided being dogmatic. We tried to engender light rather than heat; we were not trying to prove a particular viewpoint; we were after an understanding of the problem and the determination of desirable courses of action; we tried to direct our study toward that goal. The teacher made every effort to keep the problem as a whole before the pupils, thus reducing the possibility of their thinking in terms of isolated bits of subject matter.

We utilized community situations and personal experiences. We turned to audio-visual aids. (There is a wealth of material—slides, films, posters—available on this problem, as on many others.) We made use of a great variety of reading material, gaining experience in locating references, reading with a purpose, evaluating data. We had a number of individual and group activities, thus providing opportunity for pupil leadership and close cooperation among pupils who might not otherwise have worked together. The study of the entire problem was in itself an experience in democratic living; democratic procedures were used throughout. An important concomitant factor, especially needed in the handling of a problem on human relations,

is utter sincerity, above all on the part of the teacher. Our pupil-teacher relationship and those among the pupils were highly satisfactory. Any other condition might well have nullified the effectiveness of the work we were doing.

The pupils seemed as a class to develop a real and continuing interest in the problem—a most important outcome and one included in the objectives for the course. Several pupils gave evidence of genuine sensitivity and of having a real social consciousness.

Evaluation? Yes, a testing of facts, various experiences in critical thinking, measurement of different types of skill, diagnosis of specific individual differences. Evaluation? Yes, some objective, some subjective—careful noting of attitudes revealed in the give and take of class discussion; attitudes, skills, and behavior shown in committee work and in a variety of situations. Further evaluation? Yes, the ultimate value of the study of this and of any problem will be measured in terms of the social behavior that results.

In the study of a problem a pupil develops a frame of reference into which to fit ideas, ability, and behavior. That frame of reference needs to be constructed with care. The methods used in its construction should be in keeping with the carefully formulated objectives for the course as a whole and for each particular problem. Only through adapting methods to these clearly defined purposes can we hope to reach the desired outcomes.



### *Ideas From Other Subjects*

Sometimes it is possible to cooperate with other school departments in developing [English] compositions. For instance, if your home-economics teacher has been illustrating methods of interior decorating for the home, ask the girls to pen an essay on their room as it is or as they wish it to be. Ask the boys to describe an article made in manual training. If in sociology or history students are discussing politics, request an essay on "My Political Convictions"

or "Why I Am a Democrat" or "Why I Am a Republican."

Teachers gain stimulation from cooperation with other phases of teaching. I always confer with the history teachers when my students enter essay contests on Americanism frequently sponsored by the American Legion or the Pythian Society or other clubs, and the work of the pupils is discussed in both classes.—HELEN CLARK in *English Journal*.

*What a high-school teacher looks for in*

## PRINCIPALS on the JOB

*By*

CARLOS DE ZAFRA, JR.

IN THE February 1951 issue of THE CLEARING HOUSE there appeared an article entitled "What a High-School Principal Looks for in Teachers on the Job." This well-written article by Julius H. Mueller, Jr., principal of Weston High School, Weston, Mass., presented in this order these ten major characteristics as essential for teachers to embody:

1. "... ability to get along with other members of the staff."
2. "... ability to get along with children."
3. "... ability as an instructor. ..."
4. Ability "... to cooperate at all times with [the principal] and other members of the staff in carrying on such extra duties and activities as are a natural part of the school's total educational program."
5. The showing of "... a proper regard for the many demands that are made on [the principal's] time."
6. The turning in of "... all reports called for by the office ... well ahead of the deadline set and, further, [seeing] that they are neat, accurate, clear, and complete."
7. Punctuality "... in assuming their daily duties. ..."
8. The keeping "... abreast of current educational trends and practices through reading, part-time study at schools of education or graduate schools, and visits to other schools."
9. The showing of "... an active interest in local, state, and national professional organizations ... " but not to the extent "... that he or she does not have sufficient time and energy to give to his regular job."
10. Loyalty to his "... school, to the other members of this faculty team, and to the administration."

My purpose here is not to take issue with any of Mr. Mueller's major theses. But in view of the fact that the permeating influence of a principal upon his school far outweighs the influence of any individual

teacher in that school, it might be well to consider also what teachers expect of their principals in our common quest for ever-better public education. If we accept Mr. Mueller's ten criteria, then it seems to me that teachers might fairly expect ten counterpart major characteristics of their principals. Let's look at these counterpart characteristics in sequence:

### *1. Artistry in his relationships with his faculty.*

The successful handling of teachers by a principal has much in common with the successful handling of pupils by a teacher. The important thing in each case is whether the job of leadership is approached from a democratic or from a dictatorial point of view.

Does the principal respect his teachers and have confidence in them, or does he distrust and perhaps fear them? Does he know each teacher as a distinct individual, unique among the faculty, and with this knowledge make the best use of the teacher's particular interests and abilities in the total school program? Or does he assign jobs to the first teacher who comes along, or who is the most tractable, simply to get the assignment off his agenda? Does he let his teachers know him as a person, or does he cultivate being "The Presence"?

It would be trite to say simply that a principal should have a "superior personality" and be a "master of personnel relations." Specifically, he should be above petty sensitivity and the holding of grudges. Though a genuine friend to all, and even a confidant at times, the good principal

avoids the pitfalls of favoritism by showing an admirable resistance to the wiles of the shoddy "climber" and the ingratiating "yes-men" (and/or women) of the faculty. He believes no gossip about a teacher, but, in important instances, listens completely while the teacher concerned presents his case directly.

He is as just as it is possible for a human being to be. He shows no partisanship toward fellow lodge, church, or fraternity brothers, but values each teacher as a teacher. Though he backs his teachers steadfastly when he believes them to be right, he coddles neither incompetence nor laziness. Neither formal nor slovenly, the ideal principal is friendly and comfortable. Always kind and courteous, he is not paternalistic. He never embarrasses a teacher in front of pupils or colleagues. He gives reasons for his requests. He gives notes of praise or notes of commendation for jobs well done.

In short, a principal is an artist in his relationships with his faculty to the degree that there is in his teachers an absence of negative fear and the presence of confident creativeness. The remaining nine points are essentially enlargements of this first and basic consideration.

## *2. Ability to command the respect and affection of the pupils.*

Although principals are too often too far removed from the classroom, boys and girls should always remain their chief and foremost concern, not only in the abstract, but as individuals. It is important that the principal show pupils his personal interest by being present at all their major athletic and social events, that he praise the student body oftener than he censures it, and that he give students all the responsibility and authority they can handle rather than the least amount they can pry away from him.

It hurts the teacher in his efforts to establish and maintain rapport with his pupils if the principal of the school is dis-

liked by the student body. In the minds of the pupils in such a school, the whole school experience tends to be a thing to dread, and even the best of teachers are "damned by association." Conversely, by being well-liked and respected, the ideal principal helps to create a fine school morale and is thus a great asset to the teacher in his classroom contacts.

## *3. Competence in promoting his teachers' professional growth.*

Just as mediocre pupils are likely to have had mediocre teachers, other things being equal, so a real test of a principal's stature is his ability to attract, to foster, and to hold teachers of high professional competence. A truly good principal tends to hold superior teachers in spite of low salary schedules over which he has little control.

Teachers need to feel that their principal is interested in their development and promotion, not jealous of it—just as the good teacher takes pride in the success of his students. Every principal should make available to his teachers such things as a current professional library, days in which to visit other schools, and in-service training demonstrations. Himself no prima donna, the good principal forgets self-interest except insofar as it coincides with an honest and a deep dedication to his main job, not the least element of which should be to cultivate the resourcefulness, the independence, and the competence of each teacher.

As Principal Mueller suggests, there is a vast difference between "snoopervision" and genuine, creative, teacher-developing supervision. Success in the latter presupposes that the principal is, or at least was, a master teacher himself, so that he commands the professional respect of his faculty and so that he is capable of contributing understandingly and effectively to teachers' professional growth. If he continues to teach a typical class, at least periodically, so that he does not lose touch with

everyday classroom situations—so much the better.

4. *Cooperation in helping teachers to inaugurate and to maintain activities which are educationally desirable.*

If the principal has the democratic philosophy that the administration exists to serve the classroom, then he will not take it as a personal affront when a teacher suggests the inauguration of, or the modification of, a particular educational procedure.

Socrates made clear the point that progress comes from innovation, not from mere repetition of hoary methods and routines. What good does it do for the teacher to pay good money and time to take courses in which he studies advanced methods and techniques of instruction, only to be refused the opportunity of putting those desirable practices into operation?

It is true that sometimes original teachers, as original pupils, are less docile; but other things being equal, there is more promise and performance in them because of that originality. The good principal welcomes and encourages the enterprise of his teachers, however inept any particular suggestion may be. The democratic principal invites suggestions, makes his teachers feel that they are in partnership with him. He allows and goes along with group decisions; he recognizes the long-term value of creative, democratic discussion by his faculty of school problems; and he speaks of the school as "our" school, not "my" school.

A successful school in the American sense cannot be conducted under the army type of administration, where "orders" and "loyalty" are sacrosanct; to teach democracy a school must embody democracy, and its success requires the creative contributions of every teacher in it. A principal should not be so afraid of having "prima donnas" on his faculty that he has instead only yes-men who rationalize inertia and stagnation into "a respect for the traditional way."

However well intentioned, there should

#### EDITOR'S NOTE

In "What a High-School Principal Looks for in Teachers on the Job," in the February 1951 issue of *THE CLEARING HOUSE*, Julius H. Mueller, Jr., discussed ten desirable characteristics of teachers. Herewith Mr. de Zafra sets forth ten equivalent and corresponding qualities that a high-school teacher looks for in principals. And so both sides have been heard from, in accordance with *CLEARING HOUSE* policy—"An I for an I, and a truth for a truth." Mr. de Zafra teaches in John Marshall High School and East Evening High School, Rochester, N. Y.

be no compulsion by principals upon their teachers as to just which professional organizations they shall join.

Also, just as Mr. Mueller wants teachers "... to cooperate at all times with him . . . in carrying on such extra duties and activities as are a natural part of the school's total educational program," so does the good principal keep a sharp eye for equity in assignments or for obtaining for the teacher compensatory pay for undue loads.

5. *Consideration of his teachers as mature individuals with outside interests and obligations of their own.*

Of course teachers should have "... a proper regard for the many demands that are made on [the principal's] time," and the good principal, in turn, will have an equal consideration for the full lives of his teachers. For example, at least 90 per cent of the married men teachers I know in these days of high living costs have jobs in addition to their regular school-teaching duties. With salaries considerably lower than those of their principals, sheer economic necessity compels them to engage in these secondary vocations.

As Mr. Mueller suggests, faculty meetings should be "well planned" and "worth the teacher's time to attend." Furthermore,

notices of extra assignments should be given as far in advance as possible, with opportunities for making any necessary alternative arrangements. Teachers with appointments to see the principal should be given priority in his attentions, and purposeless and time-consuming assignments should not be given at all.

6. *Proficiency in stream-lining and modernizing the school's clerical and communications procedures.*

Teachers are too often asked to do needless clerical chores. Classes are too often interrupted with requests for information which the office already has, or with a notice for a student who is already listed on the school's absence list for that day. Efficiency experts for modern business and communications procedures would laugh at some of the archaic routines of some school offices. Printed instructions should be clearly worded, carefully planned, and double-checked so that hasty follow-up corrections and additions are not necessary.

7. *Punctuality in dispatching daily duties.*

Many procedures, even in the most democratically-administered school, depend upon decisions of the principal before being put into operation. For the smooth running of the entire plant, therefore, it is important that the principal have the ability to make decisions promptly, to follow through once his word is given, to do first things first, and to maintain a steady "second-wind" gait that gets things done consistently and thoroughly.

The principal's hours should be posted, just as are teachers' schedules. On certain days of the week he should be in the building and available to his teachers and pupils all day, insofar as possible. His weekly Rotary luncheon and other regular meetings should also be included. The principal who "hits the educational ball" from early until late, in school and out, yet who does

not jump at every slightest pretext for leaving the school building, sets a good example.

8. *The keeping "... abreast of current educational trends and practices through reading, part-time study at schools of education or graduate schools, and visits to other schools."*

Teachers like to feel that their principal knows his job, that he is worth his higher salary, and that he is not so bogged down in routine detail that the creative atmosphere of new ideas and willingness to experiment has been extinguished. When a person becomes a principal, that should not be the end of his professional training, as it so often is, but rather an impetus for some of the most purposeful study he has ever known.

How about his taking college courses in such areas as enlightened supervision, modern office procedures, personnel relations as practiced in some of our leading industries, and the development of fertile community relationships? For the good of the school, it is the principal, of all people, who should be "out in front" in his grasp of educational trends and practices.

9. *Recognition as not merely "a school-man," but as "an educational statesman."*

Teachers like to feel not only that their boss is a good boss, but that he is one of the best bosses in the business. This esteem is not commanded by appeals to loyalty nor by the "pulling of rank." It is earned by performance, by an active record of educational innovations and successes. Its root lies in a crystal-clear understanding of, and a time-, thought-, and heart-consuming dedication to the role of the public schools in a democracy.

10. *Understanding of and courageous devotion to the role of public education.*

There are many books and courses and people to help the principal gain an in-

sight to this understanding if he does not already have it, but to the insight there needs to be added the principal's *willingness to fight* for what he knows is educationally right and desirable.

The good principal is a leader in his school and in his community not in the sense of being a driver of men, but in the sense of being a doer, an inspirer, a catalyst. He is not above picking up a piece of paper in the corridor, nor is he below fighting for his school by educating his board of education and the parents and actively cultivating their intelligent and interested support of the school's program. Though not a spendthrift, the ideal principal would never be the captive of a board's shortsighted interest in running a "cheap" school; his community relationships and

his educational vision would be too good for that. Always are his judgments sound and consistent in the light of his personal ideals and his philosophy of education.

To abbreviate and to paraphrase Mr. Mueller's closing paragraph: These, then, are some of the things that one teacher, at least, looks for in America's principals. No attempt has been made to cover all of the qualifications of the good principal. I have, however, tried to emphasize those characteristics which I feel are the most important.

These ten counterpart major characteristics are a big order; but America's public education is a big order, and it unquestionably demands the finest possible action from our educational leadership.



## Findings

**SPELLING:** When 204 high-school students were tested with the Sixteen Spelling Scales, which contain 20 words each, or in all 320 words widely used in everyday speech and writing, the students misspelled a mean of 80 words (25% of the total). So state Doris Hageman and H. R. Laslett in *School and Society*. About 50 students were in each high-school class—freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior. The mean number of the 320 words misspelled by the students in each class was as follows: freshmen, 115; sophomores, 92; juniors, 62; and seniors, 50. The boys in all classes misspelled roughly 33% more words than the girls: the mean number of errors for the boys was 96, and for the girls, 73.

On the basis of I. Q. tests made at the time, it was found that on the whole the pupils with the lower I. Q.'s made the larger numbers of spelling errors. But the numbers of students with high I.

Q.'s who made poor scores, and the numbers with low I. Q.'s who did well, indicate that effort as well as intelligence plays a large part in spelling skill.

**SMOKING:** Of 85 students in 4 typing classes of The Dalles, Ore., High School, 41 were found to be smokers (almost 50%) and 44 were non-smokers, reports A. A. Schlichting in *The Journal of Business Education*. A study of the students' typing grades showed that the non-smokers led the smokers in "Superior" grades by a ratio of 5 to 1. And on the other hand the smokers received almost twice as many "Below Standard" grades. Mr. Schlichting points out that most of the students were 15 or 16 years old, and that beginners at smoking often suffer from nausea and dullness, which aren't conducive to speed or accuracy in typing or any other field.

It would be most unfortunate if a follow-up study some years hence would show that the smokers led the non-smokers in the number that held responsible secretarial jobs. This editor doesn't approve of smoking by children, and applauds Mr. Schlichting's resolve to work in a friendly way to curb the spread of smoking among his pupils. But nothing is going to stop smoking by students, and we just don't want you getting any gray hair over the matter.

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Good, bad, indifferent or important, there is a great amount of counting studies and other research going on in the field of education. We think readers will be interested in brief, unqualified summaries of some main points in some of the findings. Lack of space prohibits much explanation of methods used, degree of accuracy or conclusiveness, and sometimes even the scope.

# GAMBLING:

*Future suckers get their  
warning at Sea Cliff High*

## Worthy Unit in Problems Course

By  
RALPH SCOLL

A UNIT on gambling is a practical offering in the problems of democracy course—yet the problems textbooks and books dealing with problems of youth either ignore the subject or do little more than mention it.

Usually on the first day of a unit in my problems of democracy classes the chapter on it is read, and about two days are devoted to the text. But what to do without a chapter on the gambling unit we wish to undertake? How about an object lesson? Wise is he who learns from experience—but wiser if he learns from the experience of others. Trying to make them wiser, why not give them as vivid and real an experience as possible in class?

Let us first set the stage. The unit has two main points to emphasize:

1. Since honest gambling will at infinity produce a stalemate, unstacked cards, especially in the simple card gambling games where the use of the intellect is kept at a minimum, will be even for both sides. The professional or chronic gambler, out seriously to win, constantly has this in mind. To win then means cheating.

2. Next, the odds are always against you, unless you yourself are the house. A business is not set up with the economic risks involved for any altruistic motive. Profit is the aim. Bookies, Nevada dens, the small cigar store front with the back room are in "business" to make a profit. The odds constantly give the house its profit. At infinity, it goes without saying, the gambling institution will have all the participant's money.

An overview of the whole unit for the student is in order. Once the objectives are

stressed, assignments, both specific and continuous, are generally discussed and the class is encouraged to begin to find periodical and newspaper articles on gambling over the weekend. What is a better picture of motivation than to promise "real" gambling *right in class* on Monday? The eccentric teacher becomes more eccentric but student curiosity is a plus 1.00 correlation with motivation.

Every class has a booster who claims he can outwit anyone else in cards. For a direct object lesson to him, this is the individual to select for the experiment. The materials for the period were simply these: one deck of regulation cards and twenty pennies. Everyone in class made a circle around the "professional" and the teacher.

We began playing the favorite corner game, "Black Jack." For the uninitiated, closest to 21 wins, "over" 21 loses. My opponent was given ten pennies; I had ten pennies. *But*, to make the session even more engaging, I had told the class that I was positive of winning. Here was a great chance for psychic income—pleasure—for the student body. "Oh, boy! if he were only beaten, wouldn't we give him the 'raspberries!'"

What was their amazement, when not too slowly but quite surely, penny by penny the student gambler had his stake taken away from him by the teacher gambler. "The cards are marked," "You stacked the cards," "Let us deal the cards," and other remarks showed individual minor frustrations. Our professional was strangely quiet—and beaten. After the cards were carefully investigated, after the late braggart had admitted everything was according to Hoyle

and the "controlled furor" was prolonged in class until the bell ending the period rang, the class was asked, as an assignment for the next day, to contemplate the possible reasons for my being so sure of winning. The important suspense could thus be continued.

The next day, as the reader most likely has guessed, the answer was cheating. (But it must be said that a few thought it was superior intelligence.)

How had I cheated? Just as simply as any professional gambler does. When I looked at my cards, my encircling watchers were not permitted to look at them; not so my opponent, making it easy for my coached accomplice to give me the prearranged signals that informed me of "what my opponent had." Everyone then understood the eccentric lesson and my student player was back in the fold.

To drive home the point of the prevalence of cheating by chronic gamblers was easy. Here was a good instance to prove the general gullibility of youth. There weren't any who suspected me of "dishonesty," even for such a good cause. But when told the very same lack of suspicion for a smooth stranger, and especially a smoother gambler, is more or less pervasive, the object of the lesson had in most instances made an impression.

On the second day, for a change of pace, lecture material fits in nicely—not only for gambling but for any unit which has reached a high point where conclusions and arguments should be clinched. The class might also be advised at this time that I did not intend to encourage gambling by the demonstration used. Revealing how manufacturers get around the "Pure Food and Drug Act" does not imply that others will use that information illicitly.

Here is a brief outline of what I offer as lecture material in gambling. Enlargement by example is obvious.

A. Why we gamble

1. Pleasure of chance plus cleverness

2. Pleasure of risking and escaping
3. Intensification of feeling of freedom
4. It is play

B. Why gambling is bad

1. Breaks up friendships
2. Creates dishonesty
3. Leads to drinking
4. Attitude toward money corrupted
5. Weakens character

An interesting lecture of approximately thirty minutes, not over that, can keep the class's attention. Comments and questions, of course, should be invited to interrupt the instructor's talk. This is a good time, certainly, to impress the fallacies of gambling upon the young mind.

In addition to the lecture, one day should be reserved for a discussion of news of the day. It may be employed as a break from too much unit material, or current events may be used to supplement certain phases of the unit. The weekly *American Observer* of the Civic Education Association is used by our classes to round out information from daily newspapers.

But we still have our second objective to prove, that the odds are always against the foolish gambler. Another day, another contrast. Again, since seeing is believing, we resorted on the fourth day to another unorthodox and "unheard of" class demonstration. A high-low gambling machine, a contrivance shaped like an hour glass, made of

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#### EDITOR'S NOTE

*Mr. Scoll says that a unit on gambling has helped to make his problems of democracy course informative and enjoyable. We don't recall that the Life Adjustment Education program has made any recommendations about instruction on the hazards of gambling. But certainly Mr. Scoll's unit is life-adjustment education. We might suggest, with a bow to Norman Mailer, that the unit be titled "The Naked and the Bled." The author is chairman of social studies in Sea Cliff, N. Y., High School.*

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wire, with a handle that turned the contraption over so that two dice tumbled through the neck, was procured from a local fraternal organization which holds an annual carnival to raise funds. The system was that if you bet "High" and the dice read over 7, you won—below 7, you lost. And if you bet "Low," just the opposite. If you bet on a 7 turning up, the house paid you four-to-one. Also, the house won all the bets when a 7 showed, unless you were betting on the 7, in which case you got the four-to-one odds.

Most of the boys in class did not have to be schooled. The girls were different. This time everyone was given five pennies to bet as he pleased. My two collecting assistants and I were the house. The result was inevitable. One or two outguessed the machine for a while longer than the rest, but before the period taken for the demonstration was over, every penny lent out was recaptured. The reception: although the students laughed at the whole experiment, they listened attentively to my conclusions that pin-ball machines, slot machines, or any such gambling devices are set up to disfavor the players, and enough time

spent playing them meant, as surely as the passage of time, the complete loss of funds so ventured. The many comments after class assured me of the value of the unusual classroom trial.

The last day of the unit was the most important. This was because the class took over completely. The instructor was merely the coordinator.

As for many other of our units where this conclusion was possible, brief papers were assigned at the beginning of our work on gambling, in form of a continuous assignment, due when we agreed on the last day of the unit. It simply consisted, in this case, of reading a magazine article on gambling (a chapter in a book, a pamphlet, a newspaper article on gambling might also suffice), making a summary of its facts plus a commentary, either critical or otherwise, and presenting it orally to the class. The ensuing discussions put a fine cap on the investigation of a problem.

This is our unit on gambling. Designed especially for seniors, it has helped to make problems of democracy at our school the practically informative and enjoyable course that it should be.



## So Gladys' Mother Wrote Me a Note

With the weight of the world on my 19-year-old shoulders, I wrote a note to Gladys' mother. It was done in the best diplomatic manner, as my teacher trainers had admonished me to do. It ran in this fashion: "I thought that you might like to know that we were not keeping your daughter until 5:30 every night. She is loitering around the school with the boys."

Never since have I enjoyed such quick, whole-hearted response from a parent. That it sprang from any other cause than my righteous one did not occur to me. Gladys was there bright and early the next morning, note in hand. She put it on my desk with a flip of the skirt which would have warned a more experienced teacher.

The mother said in her note, with much less diplomacy and much more vigor than I had used, that she knew very well where her daughter was.

And furthermore she would like to tell me that if I had hung around school buildings more with the boys I would not have turned out to be an old-maid school teacher.

It was years before the humor in this was visible to me, and then it was tempered with the realization that the woman was probably right. It was from this episode that I learned that good intentions are not enough. Good answers are not enough. One must, as McLeish has pointed out, also know the questions. It is a sad fact that good intentions without sympathy, understanding, and knowledge can do harm as well as good. One can almost state it as a law that without the know-how, the knowing-what is useless. Doing nothing is better than doing something in heedlessness and sheer zest for righteousness.—MARIE I. RASEY in *Michigan Education Journal*.

# GROPING *my way through* the GROUP METHOD

By B. JO KINNICK

**M**Y YEARS in the junior high school have taught me one thing; there is method in some madness but there is madness in all methods!

Teachers who espouse a new method with the blind devotion of religious zealots and claim that it will cure all academic, nay, even world ills, amaze and somehow frighten me.

Method alone never saved anything or anybody. All methods apart from the people who administer them are sterile. Without the saving grace of humor on the part of the person using the method, it is an empty dogma and dangerous to educational health.

The group method is a case in point. At its best it provides pleasant variety for the well-directed classroom. At its worst it cannot be described in reasonably polite journals such as *THE CLEARING HOUSE*!

I am using the group method in some of my English classes some of the time and have been doing so during my fifteen years of teaching—most of that time without knowing or caring that it was the "group" method. We planned projects such as poetry anthologies, or literature murals, or a play, discussed the problems, divided into committees according to interests and talents, did preliminary research, then tackled the job. Afterward we discussed our work to see what we had accomplished and how we might change our procedure if we were to do it again.

There was no elaborate terminology. We never once used the words "mean:ngful" or "evaluate."

I felt it was one way to get a job done. I did not think then and I do not think

now that the group method is the *only* way.

Anyone who believes that individualized work plus a few grammar and spelling drills will reduce us to a nation of robots, while classroom work done in "committees" or "groups" will make the world safe for democracy, is merely exercising his constitutional right to be silly. So long as he does not try to browbeat everyone else into thinking as he does, he is harmless enough. Time and a little honest observation will cure him.

The only phase of the new cult for the group method which I sincerely resent is the manner in which it is being foisted on to some of our young teachers as the *ONLY* way. The young teacher in training tries it, often in a controlled situation under the watchful eye of the regular teacher. It works pretty well. The young teacher feels sincerely sorry for the old fogies who do stuffy, traditional things, make kids raise their hands, have seats fixed instead of moveable, use one textbook instead of short sets at different reading levels, and worst of all, give definite page assignments!

The new teacher feels especially sorry for the old timer who seems not to have heard that *if kids are motivated properly, they never require discipline.*

This last gem is one of the most interesting bits of fiction originated in a university school of education and stuffed down the gullible young throats of aspiring teachers.

It is more than a fiction. It is a malicious falsehood and will frustrate and defeat more young teachers this year than will be frustrated and defeated by poor salaries and

## EDITOR'S NOTE

*Mrs. Kinnick apparently isn't a teacher who can be stampeded into climbing upon the bandwagon of any "new" pedagogical idea and tooting for it as the way to salvation. Take the group method, for instance, which is her topic on this occasion. She says she has been using it for years, but just for variety, and in moderate doses. But it seems that if you want to go all out for the group method, you had better know where you can get your nervous system removed and a new one installed every few years. Mrs. Kinnick teaches English in Hamilton Junior High School, Oakland, Cal.*

inadequate equipment.

Particularly at the junior-high-school level, mischief—sometimes innocent, sometimes not so innocent—is a badge of honor. No method, no motivation can entirely circumvent it. It is the way the child at that age usually is. He expects, sometimes he even hopes for a little direct, personalized discipline. Having been justly and promptly corrected, he may well feel a new sense of security in his classroom relationships. The child who requires detention, isolation, or maybe even a trip to the office is not necessarily a problem child. Nor is the teacher who administers the discipline necessarily a failure. Let's not tell him that he is.

Surely no teacher, new or inexperienced, should try the group method until he knows his youngsters, their names, their scholastic and personal background as shown by school records, and something of their natures as revealed by his own observation of them. He needs to be in control of the classroom situation. Otherwise the method will not be "group"; it will be "mob." Discussions will not be training in democratic procedures; they will be contests to see who can shout the loudest.

The end result: The teacher will be exhausted, wonder why in Heaven's name he

didn't try real estate or life insurance, and the boys and girls will be tired from their own excessive arguments and noise, and resentful at the teacher for letting them "run wild."

Teachers who have this experience with the discussions which always accompany the group method would do well to run the risk of being thought fogies, and return to formality in the classroom for a few days or weeks until the flesh and the spirit are stronger.

If the percentage of low grades or failures runs higher in classes taught by the group method, then I feel the teacher should either abandon the method or change his philosophy of grading. I know of cases where failure or poor grades were used as punitive measures against pupils who either got lost in the classroom situation and did nothing, or used it to exploit their own juvenile power politics. Here the whole purpose of the method was defeated, since it is supposed to help the individual find himself in relation to the group.

The youngsters who took over behaved unwisely and used poor judgment, but they needed guidance before making the mistake, not punishment afterwards. Democratic procedures are often used ineptly by adults with years of training and breadth of education. What wonder then that children, especially adolescents, when thrown into a situation which demands self control and maturing judgment often meet the test poorly?

I find that group work when initiated in any class is mistaken as license and not freedom by a few students. I watch for them and try to deal with their antics kindly but firmly.

This spring when my High 7's worked out a poetry mural and we were well launched, I noted one enterprising student balancing a ruler on his nose! He is an intelligent boy, and a fine reader, but the sudden atmosphere of physical activity around him, the committees sketching

background on the mural at the back of the room, others making symbols to represent their poems, the coloring, cutting, whispered consultations, and movement proved mildly intoxicating to him.

One boy saw the group method as a chance to boss everybody, and for two days, until he was reported by the irate members of his committee, he went around with a piece of art gum erasing everything in the mural background which didn't particularly appeal to him!

Other children will walk about more than is needful, and must be checked to see that they contribute their share toward the group project. In our case everyone made a symbol to represent one poem by the author he had studied. Some did this and also helped to sketch in a background of mountains, farm, and seashore. The class wanted all three backgrounds. Others made their symbols and acted on the committee which placed the symbols in suitable places against the background. Others acted on the reception committee for classes we entertained the last week of school with "tours" of our poetry mural.

Each child made his own poetry anthology, with title page, table of contents, biography of the author, poetry vocabulary, and from ten to twenty of the chosen author's poems. Each child learned from 12 to 36 lines by his author and said all or part of his selection during each of our mural tour programs.

Part of our work, as the reader will note, was individual work and part, group work. I feel that all successful group work must of necessity depend on individual work conscientiously performed. I think only then does it have a fine, cohesive, democratic influence. Only then is it education.

I have not the energy to do group work everyday. It requires a great deal of preparation and much teacher direction. In Shakespeare's *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, we find the lines:

Thanks, fortune, yet, that, after all my crosses  
Thou givest me somewhat to repair myself.

Both teacher and student often need the greater formality and quiet of individual work to "repair" themselves.

Group work every period, every day would greatly increase the teacher mortality rate. Students would tire of it too. I have seen it happen. The group method is only a complement to other methods and should be treated as such instead of being lauded as though it had been handed down from Heaven on stone tablets like the Mosaic law.

Smart teachers will continue to use a variety of methods because variety of method is indeed the spice of pedagogy, and the kids find that when teacher handles the lesson in a new way, things pep up somehow. In the words of one of the boys, "It's like when teacher wears a red dress, or gets a new hair-do. Somehow school just suddenly seems more interestin'!"



### To Cut Their Teeth On

There is the matter of [high-school social-studies] materials. Too often they are dead and dry. They consist in the main of textbooks and especially prepared but innocuous educational materials which give both sides or the "right" side of the case. I think that these are very poor media through which to introduce our youth to the word of social realities—the world of the Pendergasts, the Bilbos, the Insults, not to mention the Hitlers and worse breeds.

It seems to me that in senior high school, at least, students could cut their teeth on the kind of materials—true, false, objective, deceitful—that adults must use in their efforts to understand and participate in the life of our society. Yet, in many visits to classrooms, I have never heard a magazine article, a newspaper editorial, or the work of a newspaper columnist being discussed. Why do we refuse to draw our lessons from the world around us?—ELDON G. WHEELER in *Kansas Teacher*.

# FUN with a

*Locating information  
becomes a good game*

## Reference Work Sheet

By

MIRIAM S. COOMBS

THOSE OF US "experienced teachers" who find ourselves taking courses are wont to groan when our instructor casually suggests that as one of the course requirements, we turn in a project. The latest trend is that it be practical—something we can use in our classrooms. Frequently it is a dud as far as practical use is concerned, but from time to time, under such pressure, we become inspired and get ideas that really turn out to be fun.

Such a thing happened to me during the past school year. I was taking a course in reading. In the course of my reading, I was reminded that the ability to locate information was a reading skill which needed development in the upper grades. This skill was noticeably lacking in my class, so as my project I decided to prepare materials which would enable my students to develop this ability. Most of these materials, when tried out in my class, met with a lukewarm reception, but one device really worked.

I called it a reference work sheet, for want of a better name. It consisted of twenty questions (not an original number). The students were instructed: (1) to find the answer to each question, (2) to write not only the answer but the name of the book or periodical in which they had found it, (3) to use only the reference materials found in our classroom. Next came a request that they refrain from helping one another (a silly request), and a note that there were several sources for each of the required answers. Our textbooks were accepted as sources of information.

I had tried to plan the questions so they would cover all sorts of subjects. I had

checked to be sure there were several sources for each answer. I had even formed preconceived notions of what sources the class would use. In several cases I was foiled completely.

The first question was: "How many bones are there in the human body?" It would have been very simple to find the answer in any of our science texts, but one boy found a quicker way to locate it. Just in back of him there were some biological charts which we had been using. He very efficiently turned to the chart upon which the bones of the body were listed and enumerated. The idea spread like wildfire. Within a very short time practically everyone had consulted the chart, very casually, you understand, while I tried not to notice.

The next question was: "Is the composer of Finlandia still living?" It so happened that our music teacher had been telling the class about Sibelius, and several people remembered that he was still alive. Their first reaction was to go after the music

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### EDITOR'S NOTE

*The students in Mrs. Coombs' class needed to become more competent in locating information. So she developed the "reference work sheet," which contains a set of questions. The students had to find the answers in reference books and other materials, and state their sources. She says that this became an enjoyable game, in which part of her fun was in watching some of the pupils find unexpected short-cuts to the information. She teaches in Woodbury, Conn., Grammar School.*

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teacher and bring him into the room as their source of information. They were persuaded to prove that he was alive by quoting the latest source of information which we had, which proved to be a book published in 1948. (This was a devious scheme to make them look for copyright dates.)

While her classmates were duly consulting encyclopedias and literature books for the name of the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, one bright-eyed girl spied my copy of the book. She didn't say a word, but that book made rapid progress around the room.

One question bothered the girls. I had asked what the chemical symbol "Fe" stood for. At lunch time one youngster said, "I've found everything but Fe (fee)." Having been brought up on chemical symbols, I found it quite a shock to have F-e suddenly become a word.

I won't go into further details about particular questions on this first sheet. I feel that I did succeed in getting my students to consult encyclopedias and our various dictionaries (collegiate, biographical, geographical, synonym) as well as textbooks, anthologies, magazines, and news-

papers. They also looked up information about their state in the state manual. They literally discovered the dictionary, having previously used it almost exclusively as a source of definitions. They began to appreciate their reference books, of which they have a liberal supply.

This first reference work sheet was followed by others—none of them absolutely foolproof—but all of them fun and with many questions suggested by individual students. We avoided tricky questions. The simplest ones are difficult for some youngsters.

After students had done one work sheet and we had discussed it and exchanged sources of information, we used the others as a spare time activity. It was a bit easier for me to have only three or four pupils prospecting for information at one time.

I recommend this as a sound educational idea. It certainly provides good training for young people who are about to enter high school, where locating information by their own efforts will be one of their main tasks. The poorer students gain confidence in the use of the dictionary, at least as a source of many facts.



## John Dewey Disclaims Child-Centered School

I saw John Dewey last May when he was gracious enough to receive me for what was to have been a fifteen-minute visit, but which turned out to be two hours instead. Despite a virus infection which had then been bothering him for a long time, he was a slender and sprightly man, much younger in action and appearance than he had been more than a decade before . . .

Here is one of his comments that will be of especial interest to teachers. "Why," he asked, "do writers and teachers insist on saddling me with the child-centered school? Anyone who has read me knows that it is the socially-centered school that I have sought."

Here, of course, is the crux of John Dewey's educational philosophy. The antidote for traditionalism and authoritarianism is not to throw past standards out the window, but rather to encourage exploration in areas of problem and doubt. To let the child "just grow," as "progressives" have in his name advocated, is to leave the child at the mercy of chance, of every wayward influence. The child comes to school with impulses conditioned by his social community. It is up to the teacher to foster those impulses, to make them conditions of quest for skills and knowledge.

The school should be the child's world, says Dewey, a world in which he is encouraged to question, to doubt, and to solve the problems that are genuinely his. Skills should be secondary to his vital needs; only thus does knowledge become meaningful, only thus can he escape the education that is mere preparation for some dubious "time to come."—ROBERT ROTHMAN in *The American Teacher*.

# LET'S NOT KILL THE GOOSE!

*The problem of high  
school music contests*

By  
HENRY WILLIAMSON

THE HIGH-SCHOOL music contest is fighting for its life in the United States today! In the past five years many schools have dropped out of the rated contest-festival and have organized their own festivals, with no rating required.

In the spring of 1950 the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools recommended to member schools a ban on all high-school contests with ratings or decisions—except athletics. Apparently this move proved to be so unpopular that in the spring of 1951 the N. C. A. withdrew the recommendation and replaced it with one which did not suggest doing away with contests. However, this sequence of events within the N. C. A. is only one evidence of the continuing pressures for and against such contests.

It is time, I think, that someone restated the cause of the rated contest-festival. I began teaching in 1932 and have been connected with music contests and festivals in two different states and in four different areas. I am familiar with the evils of the music contest with ratings. Here are some of them:

1. The concentration on one selection and the nervous pressure on students.
2. The difficulty in learning a contest selection in the time allotment available to many small schools.
3. The judge's decision and its inevitable unfairness to some contestants.
4. The endless routine and headaches that go with planning a contest festival.
5. The reprehensible custom of mimeographing judges' criticisms on a common sheet so all schools can garbage-pick and compare.

6. The racket of big-time band directors and pseudo-composers who place their compositions on the required list in order to line their own pockets.

7. The tendencies of some band and vocal directors to think they can be temperamental dictators of school schedules and butcher the periods to suit themselves simply because they got top ratings the year before.

Yet I am not ready to condemn the rated contest-festival till I am satisfied that there is more evil than good in it. I like to think of myself as a young man and yet I have seen, in the eighteen years I have taught, the rise of the high-school concert band and its spread to the fine college symphonic and concert bands of today.

Surely there are many readers who remember the small, tin-pan high-school bands of the 1920's. I remember the lack of balanced instrumentation, the old um-pah style of band music arrangements which hadn't been improved since the gay 90's.

Today we have a brand new baby, a new music entity, the high-school concert band. It can include as many as 80 to 100 high-school and junior-high musicians. It can play with good taste everything from symphony to swing. It is one of the finest ways of teaching cooperation and unselfish efforts toward a clean, common goal that could exist in our public schools. Look at its advantages:

1. It is open to both young and old.
2. It affects more students than any other extracurricular activity. You have 20 to 80 on your first team!
3. Both boys and girls can belong.

4. It has led in a scant dozen years to the rise of new and decent band arrangements and has created a vast market for American composers and arrangers who can give us good music, adapted to high-school musicians.

So what—you say. We all know this.

Yet some of us, I am afraid, are prone to forget what I believe to be the goose that laid the golden egg, *i.e.*, a series of high-school music contest-festivals throughout the state of Minnesota and other states of this country.

I saw all this happen before my eyes during the past dozen or so years, and so did many who read this. Nearly every school music teacher in the United States today got his preparation for teaching under this same system. With all its faults, it inspired directors and high-school boys and girls to produce music of high quality, so that:

1. School boards were willing to buy good instruments.
2. School boards were willing to hire good instructors at decent salaries.
3. School boards were willing to buy good music.
4. School boards were willing to provide more time during the school schedule for this good work to be carried on.

And so we got on top and here we are. A great football coach once said, "It takes twice as much work to stay on top as to get on top."

Now I want to admit something. I am lazy, and there are times when I have a faint suspicion that my students are lazy too. I believe nothing will supply impetus to a student or a director like an appearance of his group in a rated contest-festival. If students and director know they are not to be rated it is just human nature for them not to do the best they can.

I have heard it said that playing *one* number as near perfection as possible is not the aim of a high-school band. I thoroughly agree. But I must add that giv-

ing your all to play a fine musical number well, produces an effect that cannot be duplicated. It is a leaven that permeates your band with the following:

1. Technical ability to play other good music.
2. An incentive to clean out the muddiness and sloppiness that we are all too likely to leave in.
3. A drive to force some of us lazy directors to try a difficult selection and adapt it to our bands.

I know that *I* am lazy. I don't always do so well in contests, but I need that incentive and so do my students. I say the United States needs the rated contest-festival. *I say* that without a rated performance a band will slip, and a music department will slide inevitably to easier and sometimes sloppier low-grade music.

*I say* that we are too prone to think our groups are always doing right. Parents almost always think their kids do well and tell them so. Beautiful lighting and staging and lots of drum noise and baton swinging and fine uniforms can put over a program that stinks musically. Loud drumming covers a multitude of sins!

I bear no animosity to the schools whose music departments are run down. Perhaps

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#### EDITOR'S NOTE

*Mr. Williamson believes that the recent tendency to abandon music contests and develop music festivals at which no ratings are given is a threat to the well-being of school music programs. He maintains that school music needs the impetus of competition just as basketball teams need it. Of course, basketball currently is having troubles of its own—but possibly it seems a bit far-fetched to think of gamblers going around bribing high-school tuba players and flutists. Anyway, let Mr. Williamson present his reasons. He is band director of Canby, Minn., High School, where he also teaches history.*

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they cannot obtain good music directors, and Lord knows they are scarce. Too many of us, I fear, are forgetting that the rated contest-festival develops good directors and trains them as nothing else can. I have known two directors in the past few years who have changed schools, partly for the reason that school policy bans the contest-festival. These men were not glory hunters. They were just sincere directors who wanted the impetus of a rated performance.

It is certain that great music bears no tag. It belongs to everyone and everyone has the right to participate. The older I get the more I am amazed at the latent talent in students which I'd have sworn wasn't there. After all, who knows how great a band or an individual can be until the last bit of effort is expended.

I say that *we need* the sting and the steel of the rated contest-festival, just as the carpenter needs the square and the surveyor the level. It hurts to be checked and rated, but we need it to keep our standards up. No basketball team could reach its peak without competition. With all due respect for schools who have dropped the rated contest-festival, I will wager that they wouldn't dream of dropping out of next spring's basketball tournament because of a raw referee's decision this winter.

It is my belief that whatever success I may have had in the field of concert music

in this state is due to the fact that I simply had to develop a system that would produce bands capable of playing Class B music. Older directors will remember that we had to fight hard for the daily band practice and a decent and full instrumentation. It is my belief that I was a typical young director when I started, ambitious, inexperienced, cocky, and easily satisfied. It took the whip of the rating to make me investigate and learn a system which would produce results.

There are many young directors today who are equally inexperienced, although they couldn't be as cocky and poorly prepared as I was when I started. We need good directors. Experience and years in the business are not enough alone to guarantee improvement in a director. Sometimes we get into a rut and deteriorate.

A rating to me is as important as an annual check-up or physical examination by a doctor. I believe it will continue to do more good than harm in building and maintaining the fine concert bands, fine choruses, and good directors to which our high school students are entitled. We have a heritage of decent schools and decent equipment earned for us at no little cost by forward-looking directors and school leaders in the past. Let us not be too easily deceived in knocking the props from under our platform.



### *Physicians Disapprove*

Very few physicians approve of competitive athletics for adolescent boys and girls. Dr. Lowman, famous Los Angeles orthopedist, questioning 403 fellow orthopedists regarding their opinion of pupils below the tenth grade competing in interschool athletics, found that 85% disapproved. Since the majority of communities carry on interschool competition on the junior-high-school level and allow high-school freshmen (ninth graders) to compete, it is little wonder that the medical profession blames us for these situations.—DON CASH SEATON in *The Journal* (Health, Physical Education, Recreation).

### *Public Relations: Top 12*

The twelve public-relations activities which have been considered of most value in California high schools, listed in the order of greatest value first, include (a) Parent Teacher Association, (b) news releases to the public press, (c) general appearance of buildings and grounds, (d) participation of music classes in community activities, (e) Commencement, (f) reception of visitors to the school, (g) Public Schools Week, (h) adult education, (i) athletics, (j) community use of school buildings and facilities, (k) California Teachers Association, and (l) service-club activities of administrators.—JACOB F. WIENS in *California Journal of Secondary Education*.

# TEEN-AGERS *are better* *than their* ENVIRONMENT

By ANNA C. WILLIAMS

HERE THEY COME, trooping into my room for their classes, these seventeen- and eighteen-year-olds. For five hours a day, five days a week, every week of the school year, our class work follows the program developed by the department.

Like most schools we have good, fair, and poor students. Some days are "better" than others. At times it seems that my teen-agers are making progress in understanding and skills; at others it seems plain that like other creatures, we too have developed the power of backward locomotion.

The classwork itself, however, is not all; it is good and worthy, yes; but there is something that is more so, and that is the young people themselves. When I hear hard words about them—of criticism or condemnation—I suspect that these persons do not really know our teen-agers very well.

For some time now, it has been my personal belief that there was very little the matter with God's world, but a great deal the matter with the world made by mortals. Just so, in my opinion, there is little the matter with teen-agers, but a great deal the matter with the world into which they were born. It is unfair to judge them by a set of standards from previous eras; it is unjust to condemn them for imitating patterns of thinking and conduct which are the only ones they have known.

"The 18-year-old of 1951 has lived his entire life in a succession of crises," states Dana L. Farnsworth in a recent issue of the *New York Times Magazine*. "He was born in the middle of a great depression and financial problems beset his family for several years. Then came World War II to occupy his grammar-school years, and dur-

ing his high-school period the cold war has gradually become a personal threat of the first magnitude. He has never had an opportunity of experiencing the feeling that the world is peaceful and essentially benign."

Added to this are such conditioning factors as the evidence of crime and political corruption, materialism, loose morals and ethics, the high divorce rate, over-flowing prisons and mental institutions, the jungle warfare to "get ahead" and to "stay on top"—this is the world our teen-agers have been born into. They know no other.

The degree to which young people repudiate the undesirable factors in their lives is astonishing. Their fortitude in meeting and in trying to surmount adverse circumstances is amazing. The public school as a cross-section of the American public brings to our classrooms young people of all kinds and conditions. Only those who know them intimately can understand them or appreciate them; can know how well the most of them solve their problems; can see why some of them do not.

Perhaps a few typical examples of those problems that have crossed my desk will make my point clearer.

"May I see you for a few minutes after school tonight?" one of the senior boys asked. "I want to explain why I haven't finished my assignment."

"Certainly," I replied.

That night after school I looked encouragingly at his handsome, troubled face. It was harder for him "to explain" than he had thought it would be. I had to help him all I could.

## EDITOR'S NOTE

*The frequent recent criticisms and condemnations of teen-agers, and recipes for getting them into line, have annoyed Mrs. Williams. She admires them for being as staunch as they are, considering the things they've had to face. Those things are an enforced close contact with us adults, and with a world that since their birth has tottered crazily through depression, war, and cold war. The author presents some cases of students in her classes to show you what she means. Mrs. Williams teaches in Central High School, Kalamazoo, Mich.*

"You see," he said earnestly, "my mother and father were divorced. I don't see why they couldn't get along—or maybe I do—but that's another story. My mother married again and we're living in a trailer. I don't have a very good place to study, nor much chance with my little stepbrothers and half-sister around. I have to get their supper as soon as I get home from school. My mother and stepfather work and aren't home much of the time. I have to sort of look after the kids and clean up the trailer. I want to get a job to buy me some new clothes but there's not much use because my stepfather would take the money. I earned two hundred dollars last summer, but my stepfather made me give it to him."

He paused for breath. I waited and tried not to look what I felt.

"I like Central," he went on. "Gosh, I'm getting so much out of my classes this year. I want to go on to college, but if I can't do my work right here, I don't see how I would have time if I worked my way through college."

"Well Doug," I said, "let's investigate the possibility of college later and talk about this year's class work."

And so we arranged a time and place for a thwarted yet capable youth to meet his classroom requirements.

Unexpectedly one of my senior girls came into the room after school and inquired, "Are you too busy for me to talk to you?"

"Of course not," I said. "What is troubling you?"

Her eyes filled with tears as she answered with trembling lips, "Oh everything, just everything."

"Is it about home?" I asked, knowing that her parents were divorced.

She nodded miserably. "I don't know what I'm going to do," she went on. "My father is so mean to us. He won't support us as he should. My mother is sick. All of this has made her sick. I'll have to get a job and earn some money. I don't know how I can keep up my school work—and now I do know that I shall not be able to go on to college as I had planned."

Down went the suffering head on her arms as sobs wracked her young body.

Again I waited, unable to speak.

"We had such a nice home," she wailed through her tears. "I don't understand it; I don't see why it had to be. Sometimes I think I can't stand it."

That young woman *has* learned how to "stand it." She is working and "keeping up" her school work too. She has learned, oh so early, that one has to live with the good and the bad. She is an inspiration to her teacher.

Two of my students last year were already "on their own." One had been deserted by his parents; the other found living at home impossible with a stepfather and six little half-brothers and sisters. The first boy succeeded in earning his high-school diploma; the second one failed because of ill health.

I have known several girls who were either motherless, with full responsibility at home, or were living with other families and working their way. How can they do it? Of course their classwork suffers. Social and often emotional development suffers, too.

But let no one accuse them of lack of industry and determination.

Then there is Dick, who drives his mother to Ann Arbor every two weeks for treatment at the hospital clinic. And there is Tom, who has to drive his uncle's truck to Detroit every time he goes "on a binge."

Then, of course, to draw the picture accurately, mention should be made of the fortunate ones, those who come from homes where loving parents have had their best interests at heart and have done everything to the best of their ability to train them in the way they should go. We have many such young people. They are not all from the upper socio-economic brackets by any means. They fail and they succeed in what they undertake in just about the same proportion, I believe, that adults do, but they have a better chance than young people who are less fortunate and who have one or more strikes against them before they start.

Many of these teen-agers are far more serious than is generally understood. Space would not permit me to quote from their autobiographies their profound statements on life, their aims, their hopes. They rise as a man to such things as our study of the Book of Job and Pope's "Universal Prayer" in literature class. They say, "We should have more of this. The world should have more of it."

Regardless of mental capacity or outside-of-school environment, response to the good is measured only by the quality and

manner of instruction. Is the school program geared to meet the imperative needs of youth? If ever young people needed education for life adjustment, it is now. Even this is not enough—unless the program is something more than a plan laid out on paper.

We, the teachers, should vitalize it. We should vitalize it with our cooperation. We should vitalize it with our prayers for guidance. We should vitalize it with our deep and heartfelt desire to understand and to help. We should vitalize it by increasing our skills and our insight. This is not coddling teen-agers. As a matter of fact, the process has been rather in reverse. They have been fighting, winning, and dying on the battlefields of the world for quite some time now. Besides this, they have been providing us with our bread and butter.

Instead of condemning these young human beings in our charge, let us remember that they *are* young, and that they *are* human; that they are not only the product of the age in which they live, but that they are also, without doubt, the ones who suffer most from the evils of that age.

Beneath the modern façade which they cultivate, they are wonderfully brave, remarkably capable, notably anxious. With few exceptions they are lovable, and the better one knows them, the more one thinks so. Their needs are, however, very great: they need real faith, real homes, and education that is real.



### *Grades vs. Best Work*

Arguments against grading students by the traditional methods are not based on belief that individual differences in ability to learn do not exist or that all students can be brought up to the same level of achievement. The argument being made is that students be encouraged and guided to do the best work of which they are capable and that such accomplishments be recognized as satisfactory for them. The fact that one student's best is not as

good as another's is not a problem the school can solve.

What the school should do is create situations in which students can take pride in their achievements at whatever level they are capable of working. To do this is a contribution to the development of human personality of which any institution can be proud.—WILLIAM A. MILLER in *California Journal of Secondary Education*.

# "Run Your Class LIKE a BUSINESS"

*And so I tried the  
piece-rate system*

By  
BERNARD HAAKE

NATURALLY I DIDN'T agree at first, but after several hours of spirited words, Theresa's father convinced me that I had the wrong idea about teaching. Theresa was my star pupil and her father was the leading business man in town.

"Practical business sense is what you need," Theresa's father argued. "What educators really need is the kind of thinking that goes into meeting a payroll."

I gathered that being able to "meet the payroll" was pretty important, because Mr. Tillson hammered on that point vigorously and frequently.

As I listened, it seemed to me that teachers do need more of the practical, common-sense, business man's approach. We teachers need "business sense." We should apply more of the good old-fashioned business principles in our classrooms. Only then will the schools get their feet on solid ground. Efficiency could be achieved simply by using the same techniques Mr. Tillson uses in his machine shop.

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

*Things have been happening, all right, since the local business man convinced the teacher that he should operate his classes on efficient business principles, as if he had to meet a payroll. Pupil production of class work is way up this fiscal semester, and activities that can't show a profit have been replaced by money-makers. But just as you suspected, there's a catch to this—and you'd better let Mr. Haake tell you about it. He is principal of Euclid School, Schenectady, N. Y.*

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My conversion didn't come about easily, but the common-sense approach fascinated me. Mr. Tillson's logic finally overcame my resistance, and this coupled with his overwhelming success as a business man really convinced me that what worked in his machine shop should work in my classroom.

It was difficult at first. I could hardly break myself of the idea that each pupil should be treated as an individual problem. I persisted, though, and now all the youngsters get the same treatment.

My class is now a "smooth, tightly-knit organization." Some of the children don't seem quite as happy as they used to but they do produce the work and we don't waste time on "endless discussions." What I say is law; I tell the class what to do and they get busy doing it. I notice, though, that when I tell the children to write a composition they don't seem to be able to think up topics to write about. But it's easier and faster for me to tell them what to write about anyway! It is odd, that all their writing seems to be the same. One composition sounds like all the rest; something like the taste of restaurant food. Still, we do turn out lots of compositions. And fast!

Using the "assembly line" technique for teaching arithmetic produces results too. We average 43.6 arithmetic problems per student per day. The average would be higher, but the "slow" pupils never get any of their problems right! That's taken care of by the brighter students, for they catch on to new problems fast and can do the same kind over and over and over at a fast clip so that the average is built up. I know

it's efficient this way, but once in a while I get the heretical thought that maybe those brighter kids should go on to more advanced problems just as soon as they demonstrate capability in handling a certain type of problem. However, that would knock our production off and send our average in a nosedive.

If an activity doesn't show a profit we soon eliminate it. Our class wanted to put out a little typewritten newspaper, but we didn't sell enough copies to pay for the materials we used. The youngsters were so hepped up about writing for publication that I must confess that I felt a few qualms when we gave it up after that first issue. But no business can operate without a profit.

We changed to another activity in spite of the class protest and now we "meet our payroll." We collect old iron and newspapers. We even have a surplus in the treasury!

Another business principle paid off in teaching reading. I applied the "piece rate" method and gave each boy or girl points on a Book Chart for each book read. They turn in book reports galore because the student with the greatest number of Book Points gets the highest mark in reading, and so on down to the person who reads the fewest books and gets the lowest mark.

It's funny, but it does seem that quite a few try to cheat and turn in reports on books they never read. I find out these pupils quickly enough, for the others "squeal" if any of the students try to cheat. Come to think of it, it does seem queer how much the youngsters tattle, fight, and argue now. They didn't before. It's surprising, too, that Theresa got the lowest mark in reading. Seems to me she's the only one in the class who has her nose in a book all

during study period. That'll be taken care of soon, since we plan to eliminate the study period; the kids tried to argue, but study period is really non-productive.

I must admit I think sometimes that the "piece-rate technique" for reading does have disadvantages, but certainly competition is one of the fundamental principles in business enterprise. Competition never hurt anyone.

Now that I think back over the past six months, Mr. Tillson's words certainly have made a change in our classroom.

We are efficient, well organized, and we never waste time. Our room is the quietest in school, we don't have a lot of frills and unnecessary pictures and decorations on the wall, and we don't have draperies at the windows. Our room looks just like what it is—a schoolroom. We have a surplus in our class treasury, all our activities are practical and business-like, and the youngsters know that nonsense will not be tolerated. They come in ready for business, and as long as I am in the room they are docile, quiet, and efficient.

In short, efficiency is the keynote. We have eliminated all those activities that aren't practical, and our approach to the remaining activities is the common-sense, practical, down-to-earth, business-like approach. We are well organized and efficient; our attitude is strictly one of meeting the payroll.

But still—I can't understand—it doesn't make sense, but I no longer like teaching school. The youngsters seem to hate school now, and the day drags on forever. I wonder why?

Maybe I should go back to the old way—that is, the new way, of doing business—of teaching, that is.



Mathematics is symbolic reasoning. Mathematicians will not be startled by this idea, but they might be startled at the number of students to whom this idea never occurred and never was presented.—MAX S. MARSHALL in *School and Society*.

# INDEPENDENCE

*The plan  
in Tampa*

## for the School in the System

By  
A. L. VERGASON

**J**UST HOW MUCH freedom should individual high schools within a school system be given? Or, to phrase it differently, to what extent should controls be centralized? Some may say there is no problem. It may be argued that in matters mechanical, that is, in the purely administrative, they should be required to operate according to a standard pattern, but in things academic—give them essentially a free hand.

Schools, being units of a system, naturally concede a part of their "sovereignty" to the over-all organization simply by virtue of the fact that they are parts of a whole. The democratic philosophy generally subscribed to in American public-school circles seems to set up the requisite that administration be permissive to just as great an extent as is consistent with sound education-business principles.

The transition to larger administrative units slants the trend toward regimentation unless a studied effort is made to offset such a result. While this problem is by no means a localized one, it is more noticeable in those areas where the county system which has existed parallel with the district system has come to absorb the districts.

In the county-city system of Hillsborough-Tampa, consisting of ninety schools of which twelve are senior-high organizations ranging from 50 to 2,000 pupils, there is a wide range in types of schools and in economic and cultural backgrounds. Within the past four years, 36 separate and distinct districts have been consolidated by law into one district coterminous with the county. Thus the geographical divisions so well adapted to the horse-and-buggy days passed

into the present unified pattern. At the same time, a number of the schools also were merged.

The advantages inherent in consolidation of districts need not be advocated here. But this change does involve increased centralization of control, with less local determination. The dangers are there! By being aware of them and making sure that proper attitudes are maintained, we hope to make the larger unit even more democratic in operation than the old multiple organizations—unlikely as it might seem.

The new organization offers each school protection against exploitation by other schools. For example, the single-salary schedule discourages preying upon a neighbor institution to attract the more competent teachers.

In the days of the old districts, budget-making and the requisitioning of supplies and equipment were handled largely by the district trustees for the districts, and by the county superintendent and the board of public instruction for the county. Under the new arrangement, each school is allocated funds on a per pupil (ADA) basis, to be budgeted by the principal and his staff. While these budgets are subject to approval by the administrative staff of the central office, acceptance of suggestions for change in a budget rests almost entirely with the principal, unless a proposed budget is obviously unbalanced and therefore not fair to all phases of the school program.

For perhaps the first time in the history of this school system, classroom teachers are participating in the planning of the school budget. In like manner, their thinking is

being utilized in the making of the annual school calendar.

The handling of textbooks and other materials of instruction furnish another illustration of the possibilities for more active participation by individual school staffs. A standing committee, consisting of teachers, principals, and supervisors, studies the problem of making the widest possible use of the state-owned textbooks and the system-owned materials of instruction, such as audio-visual aids. The purpose of many of these materials was being defeated, we found, because unused inventories of books were allowed to accumulate and gather dust in the individual school storerooms. The committee, with a county-wide perspective, has encouraged optimum use of these tools of instruction by working with the principals and the management of the Materials Center. Schools allowed to become too individualistic in matters of this kind limit their own effectiveness and impede the progress of their neighbors.

The size of the centralized district is no longer a major problem, but the large number of persons with whom we must deal makes it difficult to maintain the necessary human touch. This handicap we are trying to overcome in every way possible. The new concepts of the function and techniques of supervision have done more, perhaps, than any other one factor to enable us further to democratize our system under the county plan. Of course this philosophy was not a result of the county plan, but a fortunate development which has come fully into its own almost simultaneously with the new arrangement.

We find that our school personnel is still amenable to being "told" and will respond to democratic procedures no faster than genuine opportunities are offered for participation. To get them to deal with one another and with us cooperatively has become a major objective. There are many evidences of progress. As understanding has developed through the monthly meetings of

principals, the various councils of classroom teachers, and special committees with definite assignments, we have found that some of the toughest problems were merely situations which required a meeting of minds. The give and take of discussion has cleared up matters that seemed almost hopeless.

We are finding that close, informal, and frequent contacts with principals, department heads, committee chairmen, and teacher groups does more to counteract the notion that the administration is displaying bureaucratic behavior than all other approaches combined. The quality of human relations which is fostered and the attitude of the leaders may, after all, be a more vital element than the organizational pattern. Centralization need not necessarily mean a soulless system which ignores the voice of its constituents.

The superintendent and members of his staff have found that there is no substitute for "getting around." Schools are living things and they require the personal touch. Without this they become isolated educational outposts operated through and by cold directives.

Open channels for sending information and even inspiration, in both directions must be maintained. We have had a considerable demand for more enlightenment about policies, board actions, and administrative decisions. This has been partially

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#### EDITOR'S NOTE

*It takes a "studied effort" on the part of the administration to keep the individual schools in a system from being regimented, says Mr. Vergason. He is director of education of the Hillsborough County Public Schools, which include Tampa, Fla. Four years ago these schools were in 36 autonomous districts—and now they comprise one district. Mr. Vergason explains the extent to which the schools have retained their independence in the new organization, and how this was accomplished.*

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met by a careful assembling—from Minutes of board members and other sources—of the many policies affecting the daily operation of the schools. To these have been added new ones, or, in some instances, revisions of ones which had become somewhat obsolete.

We find that decisions based upon intelligently developed policies give much less offense than those casual "of-the-cuff" orders which are all too often regarded as being purely arbitrary and capricious. There is a definite trend in this system toward greater uniformity of practice in many instances where being different would seem to serve

no useful purpose, unless there is virtue in sheer nonconformity.

The Administrative Bulletin, published each week by the administrative staff, goes into every school. Information is given in condensed form, thus encouraging immediate attention. One result has been less of such statements as "we are not informed" or "we don't know what is going on."

The larger unit has meant more centralization of some functions, but we find in the responses of the school personnel the assurance that basic values are coming into their own as never before in the history of our system.



## Poor Tactics in Choosing Classroom Magazines

... the committee [of the National Council of Teachers of English, on use of periodicals in the English classroom] sent out questionnaires to the superintendents of schools in major cities all over the United States, to superintendents of education in every state for distribution in smaller towns and rural districts, and to heads of leading private schools for boys and girls, both Protestant and Catholic. The data obtained thus represent a very wide sampling from the schools of the United States, both public and private, and are probably sufficiently distributed to avoid the impress of local or regional opinions or tendencies. . . .

First, the committee found that periodicals were selected almost entirely by teachers, although students paid the bill. This fact means that in general there is no primary motivation arising from the use of a given periodical, since the students themselves had no share in its selection. It tends to become, therefore, just another part of a cut-and-dried curriculum with no particular application to the adult experience of voluntarily subscribing to a magazine because one enjoys reading it.

Approximately one class period a week is devoted to the reading of periodicals where they are available in the classroom, and the important question arises: From what English activities is this time taken? The committee finds that on the whole

this time is taken from experience with the tradition of great literature and is in effect an extension of the utilization of current materials in the classroom. . . .

Another point for serious reflection is the fact revealed by the survey that a large number of schools responding to the questionnaire of the committee report the use of only a single magazine. In a discussion of this point I omit reference to those magazines which are specifically prepared for the English classroom and which may be considered in effect a supplement to the materials of instruction. I refer rather to the newstand journals which, both because of their general popularity and mass appeal and because of the energy of their salesmen, are firmly planted as a single magazine subscribed for in English classrooms.

No matter how good the journal and how generous its range of articles and point of view of authors, it is nevertheless the product of one editorial point of view and one general outlook on controversial issues. If the time of our students is to be taken from the great tradition of American and English literature to be given to current reading, surely the source of that reading should be broader than that provided by one set of printing presses.—ROBERT C. POOLEY in *The English Journal*.

# WHAT ONE

*He needn't wait for a  
faculty renaissance*

## TEACHER CAN DO

By  
STEPHEN ROMINE

**G**RASS ROOTS" improvement of instruction in the classroom is of paramount importance. It is here chiefly that the business of learning is carried on. The individual teacher has always been a key figure in this educational picture. As long as boys and girls work primarily with one teacher for a given period of time or in a particular activity or course, this will continue to be true.

All of the higher echelon of curriculum revision will be of little avail unless it seeps down into the classroom so that its benefits may be brought by the teacher to pupils through the learning activities which they experience together.

### *One Teacher Can Do Much*

The individual teacher can accomplish some very real improvements in learning. This is not to discredit cooperation with others, for this type of activity is quite essential and may bring about improvements which an individual alone could never achieve. Recognizing this, the purpose of the present discussion is to outline some things which one teacher may do with his class. In some schools the improvement of learning on a broad front may be a long time in coming; meanwhile the superior teacher should not just mark time. In others cooperative group activity may come about only through the stimulation of improvements accomplished by individual teachers working with their classes.

Improvement requires of the teacher an open mind, a willingness to try a few things and to keep on learning, and both energy and enthusiasm to get things done despite

other duties. Good teachers seem always to be busy, and busy people usually find time to do the things which they really want to do.

The wise teacher will not attempt to tackle everything at once. A smaller project, well planned and vigorously executed, is more likely to be successful than is one which is too comprehensive for the time and energy available. One project carried through successfully can be very soul satisfying, and it may encourage future improvements.

This article discusses four of the areas within which the classroom teacher may work with pupils for improvements, as follows: (1) understanding pupils better, (2) formulating educational goals, (3) content and organization, and (4) instructional methods. In each case the proposals made are only suggestive; they are not exhaustive.

### *Look to Your Pupils*

Getting better acquainted with boys and girls as individuals is one of the most promising steps a teacher can take. Too frequently Tom and Betty are known primarily as learners to be taught and only secondarily, if at all, as persons with hopes and dreams, fears and faults, and other characteristics which make each an individual.

Why not try, really try, one or more of the following ideas to get better acquainted?

1. Work with your pupils on a friendly, informal basis to discover their interests and needs.
2. Use some tests to help uncover abilities and aptitudes, interests, and problems.
3. Get acquainted with the parents of the

## EDITOR'S NOTE

*"In visiting schools in Colorado and in talking with teachers in other states," writes Dr. Romine, "I find that many fail to realize the possibilities for improvement of instruction which exist for the individual teacher, whether or not the faculty as a whole is making progress in this respect." He attempts to show just what one teacher can accomplish, "on his own" if necessary. Dr. Romine is associate professor of education in the School of Education of the University of Colorado at Boulder.*

children; they probably know something about them that will help you.

4. Look over the cumulative records of pupils with the idea of using the data constructively.

5. Talk to other teachers about your boys and girls to learn of achievements, problems, and other factors which may help you to help them.

6. Observe your class carefully for signs of acceptance and rejection among pupils and try to help each person achieve a genuine sense of belonging.

7. Be a friend first of all to your boys and girls by taking an active interest in them.

*How About Your Goals?*

What are you really trying to do with the boys and girls that you teach? Have you thought through and set down in writing what it is that they should know and be capable of as a result of working with you? Did they have anything to say about these goals? Sometimes teachers can do a great deal to improve learning by looking over the goals to be sought. Consider the following as possibilities:

1. Canvass your class to determine what they would like to get from their work. The study of interests mentioned previously should provide some clues.

2. Check the objectives which you already

have to see how functional they are in living and how well related they are to pupil goals.

3. Make a list (with the help of the class) of life problems with which you can deal and check this for clues to more useful educational objectives. Study of the local community will be helpful in this project.

4. If you have not developed objectives, do this with the help of your class.

5. Try concentrating on goals in terms of the out-of-school behavior of persons, that is, the ways in which they feel, think, and act in everyday living. In other words, be concerned with the whole person and with attitudes, ideals, habits, abilities, sensitivity, understanding, and so forth.

6. Check to see that the pupils are aware of the goals being sought and of the relationship of learning activities to these goals. Acceptance of goals by boys and girls is very important.

*Content and Organization*

There is so much to learn and so many materials and experiences with which to deal that pupils and teachers alike are often baffled. Some selection is essential. Frequently it is done by choosing a textbook or by following an established course of study. Too, the organization of learning experiences has much bearing on the outcomes attained. Isolated facts may be learned, but their usefulness in application is open to question and their retention for any substantial period of time is unlikely. The individual teacher may promote improvement in content and organization in a number of ways:

1. Check content and experiences to determine how pertinent these are in terms of (a) contribution to goals sought, (b) maturity levels, interests, and background of pupils, and (c) motivational qualities.

2. Work cooperatively with pupils in selecting and organizing learning experiences to be used in striving for educational goals.

3. Provide for a greater variety of mate-

rials to care for individual differences. Remember the more able as well as the less able pupil.

4. Keep textbooks and other learning guides up to date.

5. Be on the lookout for and bring into the classroom current materials; build a vertical file of reference and other useful materials. Pupils can help a great deal with such a project.

6. Check your classwork for overlapping and undue repetition.

7. Organize learning experiences in broad units, keeping in mind the background of pupils and the psychological approach.

8. Base more class activity on problems of living and draw from all fields of study necessary in helping pupils develop proficiency in exploring and solving problems.

#### *Guiding and Instructing the Learner*

Methodology is an important and integral part of the learning and teaching process. The whole tenor of learning is very dependent upon the methods employed. Teachers may do a great deal in this area, for example:

1. Make a list of some of the important principles of learning and use them in guiding and developing classroom procedures.

2. Introduce more variety into the teaching process.

3. Make more frequent and more effective use of audio-visual aids of all kinds.

4. Utilize community resources to a greater degree.

5. Take a more active role in working with the learner on the assignments and problems which he undertakes.

6. Place more emphasis on learning through productive activities rather than rely too heavily on analyzing something which has already been done.

7. Help pupils develop criteria for self-evaluation and encourage them to become increasingly responsible for themselves in their work.

8. Be alert to the influence of learning activities on emotional behavior as well as on the intellectual.

#### *Tackling the Job of Improvement*

Real teaching is a tough and exhausting job. It is also exciting and invigorating to those who approach it with an adventurous spirit. There is a world of satisfaction in doing it well. Teachers differ in the effectiveness with which they can employ various procedures and handle given jobs. But anyone who succeeds must tackle the job and keep at it. Perhaps it is this very energy and enthusiasm which infect boys and girls so that they, too, find interest in learning and real satisfaction in growing and developing.

The individual teacher may do many things with his class to make learning an adventure. A few of them have been suggested here. The main thing is to keep growing as an individual and as a teacher. This means tackling the job and trying new things hopefully and also vigorously day by day.

### *Cheap Math Models*

Wooden applicators, available at very small cost from any drug store, may be used to build very satisfactory and surprisingly durable models of various geometrical figures. These applicators are actually strong, uniform, straight-grained, White Birch dowels one-sixteenth inch in diameter and six inches long. The easiest way to cut them to size is to use wirecutting pliers, although single-edged razor blades may also be used for this purpose.

Students who have experience cutting Balsa with razor blades will be surprised to find that, unless considerable care is used in the cutting, the hard applicators will nick the blades. After the dowels are cut to size they should be fastened together with model airplane cement. These applicators are particularly useful in making three-dimensional models illustrating solid geometry theorems.—FRANK HAWTHORNE in *School Science and Mathematics*.

## Events & Opinion

Edited by THE STAFF

**PUZZLER:** "How old is youth?" This was a pertinent and puzzling problem of delegates to the World Assembly of Youth conference in Ithaca, N.Y., recently, says Sally Liberman in the *New York Post*. The World Assembly of Youth is an organization for people who are 18 to 30 years old. But it turned out that a good many of the delegates to the conference were "over 30."

The delegates who were infants under 21, and small fry in their 20's, were a bit worried about this infiltration of persons in older age brackets. And we're worried about it, too. Back in grandpappy's day a youth was someone in his late teens. Then the limit rose by successive mutations to 21, 25, and now 30—with a still older age group apparently clamoring to be classified as juvenile.

**EXEMPTION:** Children of Christian Science parents are to be excused from biology and health classes during the time spent on units concerning disease, its prevention and control, according to a law passed by the New York State Legislature in 1950.

Attacking the law in *Strengthening Democracy*, bulletin of the New York City Board of Education, the associations of teachers and chairmen of biological sciences of the city said that the law "creates a sectarian censorship of public education and establishes a precedent for further control by special groups. . . . The law establishes the intolerable principle that nothing can be presented in a public school to which some group of parents objects. This law is a menace not only to public education but to all educational effort because it establishes the principle that a student is to be excused from contact with ideas which at the time he does not hold or which his parents do not believe."

The teacher group points out that hereafter state examinations in high-school subjects must be constructed so as not to penalize students excused from instruction in certain units of study: "Thus, de-emphasis and virtual elimination of these topics looms up for all children, Christian Science or not. Even on a history examination, for example, no questions may be asked about Louis Pasteur or Gen. William Gorgas, for these men were concerned with disease control."

Replying to the teacher group on behalf of Christian Scientists, Francis Griffith, principal of Richmond Hill High School, stated: "The Christian Scientists have made a reasonable and modest request. . . . They have not asked that these units be

removed from the course of study or that other children be denied such instruction."

**SCHOOL MUSEUM:** An historical museum of some size is owned by Athens, Tex., High School, says Ruth Louise Holman in *The Texas Outlook*, state education journal. The museum was donated to the school by a former citizen of the town. Now housed in Henderson County Junior College, the museum is used by the social-studies classes of both schools, and both have continued to add to the collection of items. The firearms section has items that range from Revolutionary times to World War II. Among the Indian relics are a large number of arrowheads.

Texas historical items include such documents as original land grants of Sam Houston's time. American family life of the past is represented by such pieces as spinning wheels, looms, coffee grinders, candle moulds, high-button shoes, and mustache cups. The mineral and rock collection is used by science classes. One of the museum's most valuable items is a dinosaur track embedded in stone, valued at \$5,000. All of this suggests a question: Is your school in the good graces of owners of interesting collections in your community?

**COLLEGE COSTS:** Fifty years ago students needed only \$350 to \$500 for a year's expenses at some of the best U. S. colleges, according to Col. Clarence E. Lovejoy, an educational consultant quoted in an Associated Press dispatch. Today, a year's expenses at those same institutions average \$1,800 or more. Some colleges, says Col. Lovejoy, have increased tuition, dormitory rent, board, and various kinds of fees as much as three times just since World War II—and the end is not yet in sight. But as college costs have mounted, so has the number of scholarships. Even if fees and campus costs are rising, "there are thousands of scholarships, thousands of part-time jobs, and millions in loan funds."

**MATH. IN 1721:** Stacy Beakes was a 14-year-old New Jersey schoolboy during the 1721-22 school year. He is news today because his mathematics notebook for that school year, some 225 years ago, has been presented to the Princeton University Library, says the *New York Times*. One of the problems in the notebook is something you'd never find in a modern junior-high-school text: "A Certain man and his wife did usually drink out a Vessel of

beere in 12 days and the Husband found by often experience that his wife being absent it would last him 20 days. The question is how many days the wife would be drinking it alone."

**DOUBLE ORCHID:** In East Paterson, N.J., a local teacher, John Pantano, is president of the board of education. Not only that, but this year he was re-elected to the position. Comments *New Jersey Educational Review*, "Not many teachers achieve the step Mr. Pantano has taken." The *Review*, understandably, voted Mr. Pantano a double orchid.

**COLLAPSE:** Television has cut seriously into attendance at college football games, according to a news release from Yale University. Robert A. Hall, director of athletics at Yale, warns us that unless the televising of college games is eventually put on a "pay-as-you-see" basis ("phonevision" or theater television) the entire intercollegiate sports program will be threatened with collapse. Considering the scandalous state of college athletics, would that be bad? More than phonevision or theater television, what the colleges seem to need is just plain vision.

**FOR DEFENSE—TEEN-AGERS:** Teen-age boys and girls are being sought for civil-defense posts in New York State, reports the *New York Times*. A state-wide directive issued by the New York State Civil Defense Commission urges city and county defense directors to accept qualified young people for use in both target and non-target areas. The directive suggests that boys and girls could perform particularly useful work in reception areas, where injured and homeless persons would be sent. Other defense assignments listed as suitable for teen-agers include those of messengers, nurses' aides, fire reporters, house-to-house canvassers, kitchen helpers, and fire-fighters.

**RISE IN "DROP-OUTS":** A "noticeable increase" in the number of students dropping out of school was reported recently by high-school authorities throughout the nation, reports the National Child Labor Committee, which conducted a survey of the situation. The Committee states that in 1949 children were dropping out of high school at the rate of about 1,250,000 a year.

The three factors that currently are increasing the rate of drop-outs are given as: international tension; the stepped-up defense program; and increases in the cost of living. Restless in anticipation of the draft, and with family finances curtailed by inflation, more young people are being lured by the plentiful jobs in industry.

The three means of keeping students in school most frequently suggested by administrators who

took part in the survey were: improved guidance programs that offer far more counseling on students' personal problems; curriculum changes along the lines of the Life-Adjustment Program; and part-time school-work programs, or arrangement of schedules to permit students to work part-time.

**STUDENT BUS DRIVERS:** More than 3,000 South Carolina high-school students were trained during the past summer as expert drivers to take over operation of the state's school buses this school year, reports Henry Lesesne in the *New York Herald-Tribune*. The transition from adult to student drivers is being attempted by the state in a single year. This change is a result of the success of a student bus-driver program in North Carolina over a period of some years, and in Alabama and a few other states for a shorter length of time.

To qualify as a school bus driver in South Carolina, a student had to complete 40 hours of classroom and behind-the-wheel training the past summer in one of the state's training centers. The drivers must be more than 16 years old, and are chosen on the basis of scholarship, personal character, leadership qualities, and driving record. Candidates have to pass special bus-driving tests, and tests of their ability to make minor repairs. Student drivers are paid \$25 a month.

**BACCALAUREATE CURB:** Religious baccalaureate services constitute the "teaching of a religious tenet," and may not be held in the public-school buildings of New York State, according to a ruling of Dr. Lewis A. Wilson, Commissioner of Education of the state, says the *New York Times*. The ruling prohibits sermons in baccalaureate programs, but permits an invocation and a benediction.

**FILMSTRIP SPOKESMAN:** A filmstrip dramatizing the conditions and needs of the Toledo, Ohio, Public Schools was a "big gun" in the recent successful school-building levy campaign in that city, says Edward B. Talty in *Ohio Schools*. The filmstrip was introduced at a luncheon of those who had volunteered for the PTA-sponsored speakers bureau in the campaign, and "began to pay off right there." A print of the strip was given to the visual-education chairman of each of the 6 Toledo high schools, and a chairman or a student trained in projection was ready to fill engagements with a volunteer speaker in each school area. Then churches, luncheon clubs, labor unions, and other groups and organizations were sent letters on the theme, "We want to tell you—and show you—the School Story." Response was excellent. Most speakers confined themselves to commentary on the filmstrip, which made their work easy and effective.

## ➤ Book Reviews ➤

ROBERT G. FISK and EARL R. GABLER, *Review Editors*

*The Psychology of Adolescence—Behavior and Development*, by JOHN E. HORROCKS. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1951. 614 pages, \$4.50.

The author purposes not only to study the adolescent at every stage of his development, but also to point out specific ways in which adults with whom he comes in contact can facilitate his transition to adulthood. Diving deeply into the research data and literature on this topic, Dr. Horrocks concludes "that adolescence is not in and of itself particularly different from any other period of life." The adolescent, he states, "is the product of the interaction of his biological heritage and the culture in which he lives." "It is now believed that the amount of difficulty (experienced during adolescence) is a direct function of the restrictiveness of the environment, and to only a very small degree a function of biological change within the individual."

There are five major divisions in the text. Part One reviews the various attitudes toward adolescence. Part Two discusses the adolescent in relation

to his family, the rest of the world, his friends, his group relations, his sexual development, and the problems allied to this phase of growth. Part Three considers the intellectual, physical, psychological, and anatomical aspects of adolescence. Part Four is a study of adolescent activities and interests. Part Five is an overview of behavior, followed by an example of a case study.

Of interest to some is the fact that an instructor's manual containing objective tests accompanies the text.

BROTHER PETER LINDEMANN S.M.  
Chaminade High School  
Mineola, N.Y.

*Principles and Practices of the Guidance Program—A Basic Text*, by GLENN E. SMITH. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1951. 379 pages. \$3.25.

This book, prepared as a text for undergraduate and graduate students, has a two-fold purpose: "first, to become familiar with the nature and scope

### T. L. Engle's **Psychology** Its Principles and Applications

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of guidance services, and second, to develop some of the competencies required of all staff members as guidance workers."

The author, who is chief of the Guidance Services Division, Department of Public Instruction of Michigan, had presented an over-all picture of guidance services, from its original vocational aspects to the present concept of serving the individual in the full light of his nature as a complex, whole organism.

The nature and functions of these services are clearly explained, and the tools and techniques are amply illustrated. Particularly significant are the chapters concerning the individual inventory, counseling, placement and follow-up, and the evaluation of these services. To supplement the information given, there is at the end of each chapter a list of suggested readings for further study.

A unique feature is the chapter titled Guidance Services Tomorrow. Trends in counselor certification and active state and federal participation in connection with the George-Barden Act, life-adjustment education, and the Michigan Secondary-School College Agreement represent important strides in guidance services.

This book merits the attention of all who are in education, for it presents lucidly the nature, purposes, and role of guidance services in the educational program.

IRVING RATCHICK  
Samuel J. Tilden High School  
Brooklyn, N. Y.

*Teaching Secondary English*, by JOHN J. DEBOER, WALTER V. KAULFERS, and HELEN RAND MILLER. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1951. 427 pages, \$4.

In this book which "concentrates upon the role of English in the total school program in a period of social change in educational reorganization," any English teacher, whether beginner or old master, will find a wealth of ideas and material. The recommended procedures, if followed by the beginning teacher, should launch him auspiciously on his new career. Experienced teachers will either discover fresh ideas with which to experiment, or derive personal satisfaction from realizing that their teaching practices are in accord with the recommendations of three authorities. For those among us who are beset by doubts as to the efficacy of our teaching—as who at times is not?—the book should provide incentive for continued experimentation, for there is ample evidence that the authors have tested carefully all of their theories.

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Even so, many teachers may find in these pages the  
means to modify their methods so as to incorporate  
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ning and evaluation, the authors argue well for the  
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THOMAS R. COOK

Keeseville High School  
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*Robinson Crusoe* by DANIEL DEFOE,  
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*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by MARK  
TWIN, adapted by ERWIN H. SCHUBERT;  
219 pages, \$1.72.

*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by  
MARK TWIN, adapted by OLLIE DEPEW;  
221 pages, \$1.72.

New York: Globe Book Company, 1951.

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to fondly remember their boyhood; mothers to look with new understanding and tenderness upon their male offspring.

FLORIDA YELDELL  
School of Education  
New York University

*Le Français Moderne—Livres I* (rev. ed.) and *Livre II*, by ALBERT L. CRU and AUREA GUINNARD. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1951. *Livre I*, 402 pages, \$2.72; *Livre II*, 466 pages, \$3.20.

*Le Français Moderne—Livres I* (revised edition) and *Livre II* by Cru and Guinnard are extremely valuable and important contributions to French textbooks for the first two years of a high-school program. The practical vocabulary is well chosen. (The Vander Beke Cheydleur lists were consulted.) Points of grammar are presented in small units so that thorough mastery can be achieved. A short review of salient first-year grammar topics opens each lesson of Book II and there is a review lesson after each five lessons in both books. The exercises are varied and abundant.

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*Principles and Practices of Secondary Education*, by VERNON E. ANDERSON, PAUL R. GRIM, and WILLIAM T. GRUHN. New York: Ronald Press Co., 1951. 508 pages, \$4.50.

The emphasis in *Principles and Practices of Secondary Education* is just where the title indicates that it is—on principles and practices. The authors, for example, use the following outline in developing various chapters: (1) principles to be considered as basic in a given program, (2) typical or representative practices, (3) better practices found in selected communities, and (4) first steps toward improving programs.

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The most extensively developed section, to which all three of the authors contributed, deals with the curriculum and embraces about forty per cent of the pages of the volume. In line with the practical emphasis of the authors, the chapters include principles, typical and better practices, and excellent "first-step" suggestions for improving programs. The "subject-centered" and "experience-centered" approaches to curriculum development are given appropriate consideration.

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## BULLETIN BOARD NEWS

# The October Clearing House Is Here

*The following excerpts are clues to good professional reading in THE CLEARING HOUSE for October.*

Your high school dare not permit potential [science] "greats" to become "mediocrities" or delayed scientists because of the lack of suitable stimulation while you have them. University education for some comes too late too often. For time is vital in science.—*Paul Klinge*, p. 67.

Gripping does something to you. It curdles the disposition, reduces satisfaction, fertilizes animosity. The only antidote is to say something good as often as you uncork your gripes. When teachers gripe about the principal and other administrators—as they do—what is the burden of their antagonisms?—*Reed Fulton*, p. 74.

Two years ago I wrote a training program for my firm. To my surprise I found that it was almost entirely a matter of trying to establish good job attitudes; even more to my surprise I found that I was saying those things which would not have needed saying at all had I and others like me insisted on good job attitudes in the classroom.—*Edith Lackey Baumann*, p. 78.

At the beginning of the [problems] course pupils are taught to identify problems. We distinguish between problems and topics and develop the idea that a problem calls for a solution, or at least an attempted solution.—*Edith F. Erickson*, p. 82.

... A principal is an artist in his relationships

with his faculty to the degree that there is in his teachers an absence of negative fear and the presence of confident creativeness.—*Carlos de Zafra, Jr.*, p. 88.

The group method is only a complement to other methods and should be treated as such instead of being lauded as though it had been handed down from Heaven on stone tablets like the Mosaic law.—*B. Jo Kinnick*, p. 97.

The high-school music contest is fighting for its life in the United States today! ... It is time, I think, that someone restated the cause of the rated contest-festival.—*Henry Williamson*, p. 100.

In my opinion, there is little the matter with teen-agers, but a great deal the matter with the world into which they were born. It is unfair to judge them by a set of standards from previous eras; it is unjust to condemn them for imitating patterns of thinking and conduct which are the only ones they have known.—*Anna C. Williams*, p. 103.

In some schools the improvement of learning on a broad front may be a long time in coming; meanwhile the superior teacher should not just mark time. In others cooperative group activity may come about only through the stimulation of improvements accomplished by individual teachers working with their classes.—*Stephen Romine*, p. 111.

## Articles featured in the October Clearing House:

Budding Scientists: Identifying and Nurturing Them .....	<i>Paul Klinge</i>	67
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Gripping Does Something to You: Answers to 15 Charges .....	<i>Reed Fulton</i>	74
Teaching Good Job Attitudes in English Class .....	<i>Edith Lackey Baumann</i>	78
The Study of a Problem in P. D. ....	<i>Edith F. Erickson</i>	82
What a High-School Teacher Looks for in Principals .....	<i>Carlos de Zafra, Jr.</i>	87
Gambling: Worthy Unit in Problems Course at Sea Cliff .....	<i>Ralph Scoll</i>	92
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KENNETH O. HOVET  
School of Education  
New York University

*Mental Hygiene in Teaching*, by FRITZ REDL and WILLIAM W. WATTENBERG.  
New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1951. 454 pages, \$3.50.

This book ably and invitingly presents both to students in training and teachers of experience a stimulating study in this comparatively new field of education. The opening chapter, "Food for Thought," appropriately expresses the entire theme of this excellent book. Its terminology is thoroughly understandable, its content easily digestible, and the assimilative value highly beneficial.

In their main endeavor of freeing the individual to live happily and more enthusiastically, and to adjust reasonably to the complexities of existence, the authors have succeeded in a most enjoyable

and interesting manner. Their study of behavior mechanisms, developmental psychology, and important factors in individual development, along with discussion on maturity, adjustment, and normality, is very enlightening.

Problems of a classroom nature are considered in the light of applying theory and techniques for enjoying life—a major objective of education today. These applications may be used in evaluating one's own position, techniques, and mental stamina.

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LUKE WARD  
Englewood School  
Englewood, N. J.

## PAMPHLETS RECEIVED

*Measurement and Evaluation in the Improvement of Education*, edited by ARTHUR E. TRAXLER.  
Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1951. 141 pages, \$1.50.

*The Regional Introduction of Educational Practices in Urban School Systems in the United States*, by WALTER COCKING. New York: Bureau of Publica-

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